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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF WORK-FAMILY ROLE CONFLICT IN DUAL-EARNER COUPLES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

BY

SERGE FREDERICK HEIN

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Edmonton, Alberta

SPRING, 1992

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Date: April 16, 1992

To Maureen, for every reason.
In our life together may we never forget
that we are equals.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate how women in dual-earner couples experience work-family role conflict. Phenomenological methodology was used to explore each coresearcher's lived-experience of the phenomenon. Open-ended, minimally structured interviews were conducted with four women who varied in age (i.e., 31 to 38 years of age) and represented both professional and non-professional occupations. All four coresearchers were married, working full-time, and had at least one child twelve years of age or younger. A phenomenological analysis of the data revealed sixteen themes. Twelve of these themes were verified to be common to all of the coresearchers and include personality patterns influenced by experiences in family of origin; marital difficulties; work-parental role conflict and child-related guilt; stress, overload, frustration; manifestations of extreme stress; loss of quality of life; desire to decrease level of work involvement; rationalization of impact of working; avoidance of confrontations and conflict; spillover; child/ren reacting to her working; and management of role conflicts. The implications of these findings for future research and for counseling dual-earner couples are also considered.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

I. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW 1

Introduction 1

Overview of Thesis 2

The Literature 3

Quantitative Research on Work-Family Role Conflict 6

Family Domain 6

Work Domain 10

Consequences 13

Coping Strategies 15

Qualitative Research on Work-Family Role Conflict 24

Family Domain 24

Work Domain 27

Consequences 28

Coping Strategies 29

II. METATHEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS 33

Philosophical Assumptions of Natural Science Research in Psychology 33

Philosophical Assumptions of Phenomenological Research in Psychology 35

Evaluation of the Phenomenological Method 37

Validity 37

Reliability 39

Generalizability 39

III. METHODOLOGY 41

Bracketing My Presuppositions and Beliefs 42

Coresearcher Selection 44
Procedure 46
Data Analysis 49
IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION 52
Elizabeth 52
Personal Information 52
Overall Synthesis of Elizabeth's Experience 64
Vicki 67
Personal Information 67
Overall Synthesis of Vicki's Experience 81
Gail 85
Personal Information 85
Overall Synthesis of Gail's Experience 96
Andrea 100
Personal Information 100
Overall Synthesis of Andrea's Experience 114
Shared Experience 118
Overall Synthesis of Shared Experience 122
Discussion 124
Stressors 124
Early Learning 126
The Marital Relationship 129
Repercussions of Work-Family Role Conflict 132
Personal Coping Mechanisms 133
V. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION 136
New Research Findings 136
Limitations of the Research 140

Implications for Further Research 141
Implications for Counseling Dual-Earner Couples 142
Conclusion 144
REFERENCES 146
APPENDIX A: Transcribed Interview with Gail 154
APPENDIX B: Study Description 175

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
1	Thematic Abstraction of Elizabeth's Experience	54
2	Thematic Clusters of Elizabeth's Experience	63
3	Thematic Abstraction of Vicki's Experience	69
4	Thematic Clusters of Vicki's Experience	80
5	Thematic Abstraction of Gail's Experience	87
6	Thematic Clusters of Gail's Experience	95
7	Thematic Abstraction of Andrea's Experience	102
8	Thematic Clusters of Andrea's Experience	113
9	All Themes For All Coresearchers	120
10	Higher Abstraction of Clustered Shared Themes	121

Chapter One

Introduction and Literature Review

This study involves a phenomenological investigation of how women in dual-earner couples experience conflict between their work and family roles. My reasons for choosing to study this particular phenomenon are varied and have evolved over some time. As an undergraduate, I found myself very interested in both psychology and organizational theory. In my final year as an undergraduate, a course which I took sensitized me to issues of gender roles in organizations. I was stunned by the extent to which gender roles permeated not only organizations but life in general. In the years since taking this course, I have often reflected on the pervasiveness of gender roles in guiding human behavior and their powerful and often subtle nature. I became more aware of my own gender conditioning and how gender role stereotypes exist largely unexamined and hidden from our awareness.

As a graduate student, I gained further exposure to gender issues and gender role socialization and also became more aware of the difficulties that some of my friends faced in attempting to juggle the demands of multiple roles. I also began to realize the extent to which women experienced such role conflicts. I found myself wanting to know more about the phenomenon of work-family role conflict as experienced by working mothers.

It was therefore felt that an investigation of the many aspects of the phenomenon would be best accomplished through the use of the phenomenological method, which examines the lived-experience of a phenomenon in a holistic way. The purpose of this study is to explore women's experiences of work-family role conflict in a manner which has not occurred in the research literature thus far. It is the researcher's aim to investigate the

phenomenon where it occurs naturally: in the day-to-day lived experience of individual women.

Overview of Thesis

In addition to outlining the question that is being addressed in this study, Chapter One also includes a broad review of existing literature pertaining to work-family role conflict. The review is divided into two sections, with the first section examining the quantitative literature and the second section examining the qualitative literature. Within each section, the literature is divided into four sections which address the family domain, the work domain, consequences of work-family role conflict, and coping strategies.

Chapter Two focuses on contrasting the natural science and the phenomenological approach to research. Emphasis is placed upon delineating the philosophical assumptions underlying each methodology. The issues of validity, reliability, and generalizability are also addressed.

Chapter Three describes the particular phenomenological method used in this study and includes information regarding coresearcher selection, data collection, and data analysis. A description of my presuppositions and beliefs in beginning this study is also included.

Chapter Four presents the results of the phenomenological analysis of the data, including descriptions of both individual and shared experiences. The findings are also discussed with reference to the literature reviewed in Chapter One.

Chapter Five includes further discussion of the new research findings, the limitations of the research, and the implications of the findings for future research and for counseling dual-earner couples.

The Literature

The majority of families in North America can no longer be described in terms of the traditional stereotype in which the father occupies the provider role and the mother fills the homemaker role. Rather, the dominant lifestyle is one in which both parents are employed. Specifically, the number of dual-earner families in Canada has increased sharply from 34% of all husband-wife families in 1967, to 62% in 1986 (Moore, 1989). Moreover, this trend toward greater female employment is one which is expected to continue (Voydanoff, 1985). Although there are clear benefits (i.e., a higher standard of living or in many cases, the maintenance of an adequate standard of living) associated with such a lifestyle, members of such relationships can be exposed to additional pressure and stress arising from conflict between their work and family roles and those of their partners. Consequently, such individuals are faced with the realization that work and family spheres are not separate and that the demands of both must somehow be balanced.

Traditional role theorists (Biddle, 1979; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Strean, 1974) have defined a role as a set of behavioral expectations for a person within a particular social position. Role conflict is therefore defined as the simultaneous presence of two or more role expectations, such that complying with one results in increased difficulty in complying with the other or excludes it entirely (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

Two types of role conflict have also been identified: interrole conflict and intrarole conflict. Interrole conflict refers to incompatible role expectations arising as a result of occupying multiple roles, whereas intrarole conflict involves the contradictory expectations that different relevant groups hold for the same role (Sarbin & Allen, 1968).

Work-family role conflict is a form of interrole conflict and occurs when meeting the expectations of the family role is seen as incompatible with work role expectations and vice versa (Frone & Rice, 1987). In the literature, many terms have been used to describe work-family role conflict: work/nonwork role conflict (Wiley, 1987), work-family interference (Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987), workplace-family role strain (Googins & Burden, 1987), home-nonhome conflict (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1983), multiple role stress (Sekaran, 1983), work-family strain (Keith & Schafer, 1980), and role harmony (Cartwright, 1978).

In their review of the literature, Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have suggested three major forms of work-family role conflict. The first form is referred to as time-based conflict and results when multiple roles compete for an individual's time. Consequently, time devoted to activities within one role make it difficult to meet the expectations associated with the other role. The second form, strain-based conflict, exists when strain symptoms (e.g., tension, anxiety, fatigue, irritability) created by one role (i.e., role strain) make it difficult to meet the demands of another role. Last, behavior-based conflict occurs when the specific behaviors required in one role are incompatible with the behavioral expectations of another role. Thus, if an individual is unable to adjust their behavior so as to meet the requirements of different roles, role conflict is likely to occur.

Voydanoff (1985) conceives of work-family role conflict somewhat differently, employing only two types: overload and interference. Overload exists when time and energy demands are too great for the individual to meet them adequately. Interference occurs when work and family roles make conflicting demands and the individual finds it difficult to fulfill the requirements of both. Moreover, interference can take two forms. First, the expectations of work and family may be contradictory or a lack of consensus may exist

regarding expectations. Second, role incompatibility may exist, where the demands of both roles conflict and therefore make it impossible to fulfill both.

There are also many different ways in which researchers have defined a relationship in which both partners are employed. A dual-earner couple refers to a couple where both partners are members of the paid labor force (Piotrkowski & Repetti, 1984). In contrast, a dual-career couple -- a phrase first coined by Rapoport and Rapoport (1969) -- is a specific subtype of the dual-earner category in which both partners are committed to their own careers (Rachlin, 1987). Here, career is characterized as involving a high level of training, high personal salience, significant ego involvement, and increases in power, status, and salary over time (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969). Several researchers (Aldous, 1982; Piotrkowski & Repetti, 1984) have argued for the use of the term dual-earner over other commonly used terms such as dual-worker or dual-career. The term dual-worker is limited because it implies that unpaid household work is not "truly" work. Similarly, the term dual-career is also limited in that it is too restrictive and obscures important differences among families. In addition, the term dual-earner is broad enough to include other terms such as two-career (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, Granrose, Rabinowitz, & Beutell, 1989) or two-job (Cherpas, 1985). Therefore, for the purposes of this investigation, the term dual-earner will be used whenever possible.

Two major lines of research on work-family role conflict in dual-earner families can be identified from the literature: quantitative and qualitative. They can be distinguished by both the types of questions which are asked and the methods used to answer them. Prior to discussing both bodies of research, however, it should be emphasized that due to changing norms and attitudes regarding women's employment, studies conducted in the 1950's and 1960's

may not be as relevant for this study's purposes as those conducted more recently. Consequently, the review will concentrate on more recent research.

Quantitative Research on Work-Family Role Conflict

The natural science approach to investigating work-family conflict is by far the more extensive of the two lines of research. It is characterized by attempts to predict the consequences for dual-earner families of wives' paid work and by the use of relatively large sample sizes and quantitative methods of analysis. In examining the quantitative literature on work-family role conflict, information has been grouped into a number of clusters representing the family domain, the work domain, consequences of work-family role conflict, and coping strategies.

Family Domain

A number of important antecedent variables have been identified within the family domain. Perhaps one of the most important of these involves the level of enabling or supportive behaviors from one's spouse. Several studies by Holahan and Gilbert (1979a, 1979b) have identified emotional support from one's spouse as a crucial variable for the reduction of role conflict experienced by working mothers. Similarly, Gray (1983) found that receiving emotional support from one's spouse (and other significant others) was linked to satisfaction with the handling of roles in a group of married professional women.

A number of studies have focused specifically on the extent of role sharing (i.e., level of egalitarianism or equality) in dual-earner families. Despite recent trends toward egalitarianism, a pattern of asymmetry still predominates such that women retain a greater proportion of domestic responsibilities (Kingston & Nock, 1985; Lewis & Cooper, 1987; Nickols & Metzen, 1982; Pleck, 1977, 1985; Rachlin, 1987; Sekaran, 1985). This trend also becomes more prevalent once parenthood has been reached (Belsky, Spanier, & Rovine,

1983). Moreover, married women's employment has resulted in only a slight increase in husbands' family work (Condran & Bode, 1982; Coverman & Sheley, 1986; Googins & Burden, 1987; Nickols & Metzen, 1982; Pleck, 1985; Scanzoni & Fox, 1980). Googins and Burden (1987) found that male parents, whether married or single, spent approximately 10 to 15 fewer hours per week in family work (i.e., home chores and child care) than female parents. Having a wife who was employed had no effect on the amount of time that these males spent on family work. Consequently, because women bore a disproportionate share of family responsibility, they were considered to be at higher risk for work-family role strain.

Additionally, Coverman and Sheley (1986) found that the most important factors influencing the amount of time that men spent in housework were time spent in paid work and leisure activities. Interestingly, men's contributions to housework also increased with age and previously married men (i.e., divorced, separated, or widowed) performed the most housework, while single men performed the least.

Egalitarianism is closely related to the concept of equity in the sharing of role responsibilities. Equity refers to a feeling of fairness that an individual derives when they assess the overall balance of rewards and constraints present in a relationship (Rachlin, 1987). It emphasizes a sense of fairness over time as opposed to a condition of equality as the central component in evaluating a relationship and for this reason, has been considered to be more pragmatic than egalitarianism (Rice, 1979). It may involve conditions of inequality at times, with partners willingly alternating heavy role demand periods in the knowledge of the long-term fairness of the arrangement (Kater, 1985). Googins and Burden (1987) concluded that the apparent inequity in domestic responsibilities may be an important factor in explaining why the

married female parents in their study exhibited the highest levels of work-family role strain.

Another interesting aspect of role sharing in dual-earner couples that bears noting is that women experience much more worry than men over the quality of others' performance of household tasks (Keith & Schafer, 1980).

Another antecedent variable which has been found to be strongly related to women's experiences of work-family role conflict is their stage in life and is often defined in terms of the ages and number of children present in the family. Hall (1975) found that as women advanced in life stages, they were more likely to experience role conflict. It should be noted, however, that the study's focus was on the existence or absence of conflict (and not on its severity) and that these findings may therefore be misleading.

In terms of the number of children present in the family, it has been found that as the number of children living at home increases, women experience more work-family role conflict and role strain (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1982; Keith & Schafer, 1980), less role harmony (i.e., the ability to integrate the demands of work life and family commitments) (Cartwright, 1978), and increased mental health or well-being (Sekaran, 1985). This last finding would seem to suggest that as the number of children in a family increases, older children may contribute to women's well-being by assuming a portion of domestic responsibilities and providing emotional support. However, this finding should be interpreted cautiously as this study did not consider children's age.

A related variable, family role (consisting of both spousal and parental roles), has also received research attention. A study by Kandel, Davies, and Ravies (1985) revealed that although levels of stress and strain are lower in family roles than in occupational or housework roles, when stress and strain do occur in family roles, the consequences for the psychological well-being of

women are more severe. Moreover, family conflict (i.e., the degree of incompatible role pressures experienced by a person within the family domain) has been shown to be positively related to work-family role conflict (Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983; Loerch, Russell, & Rush, 1989). More specifically, family conflict has been found to be associated with time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based forms of work-family role conflict in women (Loerch et al., 1989). Additionally, high role expectations from family contribute to work-family role conflict and can both induce and reduce physical symptoms of strain (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984).

When the parental role in particular is examined, it is evident that the role of parent is the major source of stress for women (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Lewis & Cooper,1987); results in far more work-family role conflict for mothers than fathers (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979a; Lewis & Cooper, 1987); and has a negative, exacerbating impact on work-related stress (Kandel et al., 1985). Moreover, Barnett and Baruch (1985) found that regardless of employment status, women with children experienced greater role overload than women without children. It is also interesting to note that women devalue the parenting contribution of the father role and see a father as less "tied down" and less child-oriented (Chassin, Zeiss, Cooper, & Reaven, 1985).

Several studies have also dealt with the quality of womens' experiences in their social roles. Barnett and Baruch (1985) found that the quality of these experiences (i.e., the balance existing between rewarding and distressing role attributes) was a major predictor of role overload, role conflict and anxiety, especially within the parental role. Moreover, aspects of social roles which are especially stressful include feelings of dissatisfaction arising from interpersonal interactions, especially in family roles (Kandel et al., 1985).

The gender role attitudes of both partners has also been investigated as a variable associated with work-family role conflict. In terms of the gender role attitudes of parent couples, Holahan and Gilbert (1979a) found that traditional gender role attitudes were associated with higher role conflict in both genders.

When husbands' gender role attitudes in particular are examined, Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) found that although these attitudes were not directly related to wives' experiences of role conflict, the relationship between the time demands of the nonhome role (women who were attending college were used in this study) and role conflict was stronger for women whose husbands held relatively traditional gender role attitudes.

In terms of womens' gender role attitudes, Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) found that women who held non-traditional gender role attitudes experienced greater role conflict than women who held more traditional gender role attitudes.

Work Domain

Antecedent variables associated with the work domain have also been found to influence work-family role conflict. One of the most heavily investigated areas involves work schedule characteristics and specifically, the extent of women's work involvement. A number of studies have found that work involvement is positively associated with work-family role conflict (Greenhaus, Bedeian, & Mossholder, 1987; Greenhaus et al., 1989; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979a; Wiley, 1987). In the Greenhaus et al. (1989) study, this relationship was found for both time-based and strain-based forms of work-family role conflict and was significantly stronger for women than men.

Cooke and Rousseau (1984), using a similar antecedent variable, found that work-role expectations (i.e., the expectations to expand an individual's work role beyond the normal hours of work) were positively associated with work-

family role conflict. Similarly, Keith and Schafer (1980) found that women who spent more time at work experienced greater work-family strain.

Other work schedule characteristics have also been researched. For example, Pleck and Staines (1985) found that women's weekend work; working a variable pattern of days; and working a variable shift; each had only weak, non-significant effects on the various types of work-family role conflict measured. Moreover, although working nondaytime shifts predicted significantly high levels of housework for wives, it was not significantly associated with overall work-family role conflict , hours conflict, or schedule conflict. However, an area in which significant effects did occur involved women holding a second job. Here, second jobs were associated with greater hours conflict and lower levels of family adjustment. Perceived nonsupport within the work environment and reward inequity have also been associated with high levels of work-family role conflict (Greenhaus et al., 1987).

Another antecedent variable associated with the work domain involves work role salience, defined as the level of importance of work and career in an individual's life (Beutell & Greenhaus,1982). Work role salience has been found to be negatively associated with work-family role conflict for women (Beutell, 1983, cited in Frone & Rice, 1987). However, other related concepts have produced somewhat different findings. Holahan and Gilbert (1979a) found that for career women, the degree of career commitment (defined as the level of commitment to one's profession and level of aspirations with respect to professional recognition and achievement) was not significantly related to work-family role conflict. In another study, Holahan and Gilbert (1979b) investigated the relationship between perceptions of work as a career versus a job and work-family role conflict. They predicted that women who viewed their work as a career would experience greater work-family role conflict because of the

greater personal investment and involvement associated with pursuing a career. However, the results indicated that women with careers did not report significantly more work-family role conflict than women with jobs. Similarly, Locksley (1980) found that working wives' degree of intrinsic interest in work (e.g., personal identification with the work role) was unrelated to work-family role conflict.

In their review, Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) suggest that these inconsistent findings may be due to a conceptual shortcoming: the failure to identify unmeasured role pressures within the family domain. Based on this analysis, Frone and Rice (1987), utilizing the concept of job involvement (defined as the importance of the work role to one's self-concept), distinguished between two types of family involvement (i.e., spousal and parental) and as a result, identified two types of work-family role conflict: job-spouse conflict and job-parent conflict. They found that job involvement was positively associated with job-spouse conflict among high spouse-involved individuals but was unrelated to job-spouse conflict for low spouse-involved individuals. Moreover, job involvement was positively associated with job-parent conflict regardless of the level of parental involvement. In terms of the second finding, Frone and Rice provide two possible explanations. First, it is possible that the minimum standards held by individuals for the parental role may be high enough to result in interrole conflict. Second, parental role demands may be more difficult to avoid than those of other roles, thereby resulting in increased perceptions of interrole conflict.

A somewhat related finding was made by Beutell and Greenhaus (1982) who found that women with levels of work role salience similar to their husbands' experienced less work-family role conflict than women whose work role salience was either higher or lower than that of their husbands. Beutell and

Greenhaus attempt to explain these findings by suggesting that low work role-salient women who have low work role-salient husbands may experience lower levels of work family role conflict because of the ability of both partners to more easily accomodate to various role demands. Additionally, the equally low levels of work-family role conflict experienced by high work role-salient women with high work role-salient husbands may be due to mutual understanding of career aspirations, values, and concerns and mutual accomodation.

A variable which is related to both work involvement and work role salience is organizational commitment. The concept involves such aspects as a strong belief in and acceptance of organizational values; a willingness to make a considerable effort for the organization; and a strong and intense desire to remain a member of the organization (Wiley, 1987). Wiley found that organizational commitment was positively associated with work-family role conflict. More specifically, the findings suggested that increased organizational commitment may result in increased perceptions by the individual and/or other family members that the individual is not meeting the obligations of the family role.

Family intrusions at work, which are also referred to as family-to-work spillover, have also been investigated. For example, Loerch et al. (1989) found that the frequency of family intrusions at work was related to strain-based conflict for women.

Consequences

Work-family role conflict can have consequences for many different facets of women's lives. One major area involves the well-being experienced by women. The term encompasses both physical and psychological (or emotional) well-being and also includes such terms as mental health (Sekaran, 1985) and physical strain (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984). A number of studies

have found work-family role conflict to be associated with decreased physical and psychological well-being (Cartwright, 1978; Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; Googins & Burden, 1987; Hall, 1975; Sekaran, 1985). For example, work-family role conflict has been associated with physical symptoms of strain such as fatigue, heart palpitations, hands perspiring, and nervousness (Cooke & Rousseau, 1984). Moreover, Googins and Burden found that work-family role strain was strongly associated with depression. Mothers were considered to be at highest risk for depression because of the disproportionate share of domestic responsibilities that they must assume.

A variable which is related to well-being is self-esteem, which refers to the feelings of competence and self-worth held by an individual (Sekaran, 1985). Several studies have suggested that work-family role conflict is negatively associated with self-esteem (Cartwright, 1978; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979a).

Another area in which work-family role conflict can have consequences is the level of satisfaction experienced with various domains. A variable which has typically been used to refer to the degree of satisfaction obtained from various facets of one's life other than one's job, is life satisfaction. A number of studies have found that work-family role conflict is negatively associated with life satisfaction for women (Googins & Burden, 1987; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979a; Sekaran, 1985; Wiley, 1987). Moreover, the study by Holahan and Gilbert (1979a) identified various types of life satisfaction (i.e., professional, spouse, parent, and self) and found all of these to be negatively related to work-family role conflict. Similarly, job satisfaction, defined as the degree of satisfaction obtained in the workplace, has also been found to be negatively related to work-family role conflict (Googins & Burden, 1987; Wiley, 1987).

A preference for reduced hours has also been identified as an outcome of work-family role conflict. Specifically, Moen and Dempster-McClain (1987) found that women who reported work-family role strain were five times more likely than those without such strains to prefer a reduction in their work hours. Over half of the women in the sample stated that they preferred to work fewer hours so that they could spend more time with their spouse and children.

Coping Strategies

In addition to identifying the possible causes and consequences of work-family role conflict, it is important to identify coping strategies that may be useful in managing such conflict. Hall (1972) has identified three strategies for coping with interrole conflict. Type I coping, which is referred to as structural role redefinition, involves "an active attempt to deal directly with role senders and lessen the conflict by mutual agreement on a new set of expectations" (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1983, p. 44). Role senders, as used here, refers to those individuals who impose expectations concerning a person's performance within a particular role (Dyk, 1987). However, one may not always be able to change role senders' expectations. Type II coping, referred to as personal role redefinition, involves "changing one's attitudes and perceptions of role expectations rather than attempting to change expectations themselves" (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1983, p. 44). Type III coping, referred to as reactive role behavior, "relies strictly on existing role behaviors (i.e., meeting all role senders' expectations) with no attempt to alter the structural or personal definition of one's role" (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1983, p. 44). Thus, an individual employing this coping strategy attempts to meet all of the demands associated with competing roles by working harder or using organizational skills without attempting to reduce role demands or conflicts. It is not surprising, then, that this coping style requires a great deal of energy (Hall, 1972). This coping style is

typified by the "superwoman" syndrome and appears to be quite common among married women involved in multiple roles (Friedan, 1979, cited in Dyk, 1987).

Early research (Hall, 1972) suggested that Type I and Type II coping strategies were more effective than Type III coping strategies in reducing interrole conflict. Moreover, women who used Type I or Type II coping strategies reported greater satisfaction with the way in which they handled their life roles than women who used Type III coping strategies.

More recent studies have tended to confirm these findings. Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) found that women rated Type I and Type II coping strategies as more successful in resolving home-nonhome conflicts than Type III coping strategies. Based upon this finding, it was suggested that attempting to meet all role demands by becoming more efficient (i.e., attempting to be a superwoman) is unlikely to be a successful strategy.

A study by Gray (1983), although not using Hall's (1972) classification scheme for coping strategies, produced similar findings. Women's satisfaction with handling of roles was positively related to the use of coping strategies such as having family members assist with household duties; reducing standards for certain roles; scheduling and organizing activities carefully; having family members assist in resolving role conflicts; and considering one's own personal interests as important. A brief examination of these strategies reveals that they can be classified as either Type I or Type II coping strategies. In contrast, coping strategies that were negatively associated with women's satisfaction with handling of roles included keeping roles totally separate; eliminating entire roles; attempting to meet the expectations of all roles; overlapping roles; and having no conscious strategies for dealing with role conflicts. It is evident that the majority of these strategies can be classified as Type III coping strategies.

Moreover, other factors which were also linked to satisfaction for many of the women in the study included receiving emotional support from significant others; avoiding competition with one's husband; obtaining trustworthy outside help to assist with household chores; possessing an attitude of determination to succeed; and possessing an optimistic outlook.

A study by Gilbert, Holahan, and Manning (1981), however, produced somewhat different findings than those outlined above. Contrary to what had been expected, they found that women who relied on a role redefinition strategy (which includes Hall's Type I and Type II coping) did not differ from women who relied on a role expansion strategy (equivalent to Hall's Type III coping) in self-reported work-family role conflict and coping effectiveness. Gilbert et al. suggest that the unexpectedly high level of work-family role conflict reported by the role redefinition group was due to unresolved guilt. More specifically, in redefining role expectations, some parenting functions may have been eliminated or limited, thereby resulting in considerable internal guilt over perceived neglect of aspects of the maternal role.

It has also been found that the negative relationship between Type III coping and level of life satisfaction is stronger for women whose husbands are dissatisfied with their own lives (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1982, 1983). Beutell and Greenhaus (1982) suggest that perhaps a husband who is dissatisfied with his own life arouses feelings of incompetence (and life dissatisfaction) in his wife by being too demanding and then criticizing her for inadequate role performance.

Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) also found that Type III coping was the most frequently used coping strategy. Moreover, the number and importance of nonhome roles (e.g., student, employee, volunteer) in which a woman participates is negatively related to the use of this strategy (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1982). Beutell and Greenhaus (1982) add that although it was not

possible to determine whether a woman's role involvement influences the choice of coping strategy or whether coping influences the level of role involvement, a woman's participation in important nonhome roles does not necessarily mean that she must ignore, suppress, or try to meet incompatible role expectations.

A wide range of specific coping strategies have also been outlined in the literature (Dyk, 1987; Freeman, Logan, & McCoy, 1987; Gray, 1983; Kater, 1985; Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987; Piotrkowski & Repetti, 1984). In terms of Type I coping or structural role redefinition, a number of strategies can be identified. One such strategy involves giving up or adding a particular aspect of a role, as opposed to the entire role (Dyk, 1987). For example, this may involve developing arrangements which allow parents to reduce their work involvement during the early stages of the family cycle when child-care responsibilities are high (Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987); eliminating aspects of women's family role such as cooking (Gray, 1983); parents limiting the time they spend in volunteer activities so that they can participate in activities that are most important for the family's growth (Dyk, 1987); and obtaining flexible work hours (Taylor, 1980, cited in Cherpas, 1985).

In terms of the use of flextime as a coping strategy, Nickols and Metzen (1982) maintain that its proponents overlook the sacrifices that women must make in terms of career advancement and other benefits. Moreover, they feel that flexible work schedules are not more likely to strengthen women's ability to elicit their husbands' help with housework.

A second strategy involves meeting role expectations by gaining the support of other members of one's role set. This would include one's spouse, children, and other individuals present within nonhome roles (Dyk, 1987). Examples of this strategy might include sharing responsibility for child care

activities with one's spouse (Dyk, 1987; Kater, 1985) and obtaining help with domestic chores from other family members (Dyk, 1987; Kater, 1985).

A third strategy involves obtaining assistance from individuals outside of one's role set to help meet role expectations (Dyk, 1987; Kater, 1985). This might include hiring outside help to do housecleaning, yardwork or attend to children (Dyk, 1987). Kater (1985) also adds that the hiring of outside help is "one of the simplest and most easily implemented solutions" (p. 77) to relieve role overload. Government-subsidized child care and work site child care may also be options for couples (Taylor, 1980, cited in Cherpas, 1985).

When Type II coping or personal role redefinition is examined, a number of strategies can also be identified. First, individuals can set relative priorities for their family and work (or other non-family) roles and prioritize the activities associated with each role (Dyk, 1987). Thus, responsibilities which can only be performed by a specific person (e.g., a nursing mother) or cannot be postponed (e.g., a work submission deadline) take precedence and other, less pressing responsibilities can, in the case of family responsibilities, be delegated or shared (Dyk, 1987).

A second strategy involves compartmentalization of various roles, thereby minimizing role overlap (Dyk, 1987). More specifically, it refers to an individual's choice not to attend to one role while another is being performed. It is the opposite of role integration, which involves the simultaneous performance of roles (Dyk, 1987). An example of compartmentalization, then, might involve a woman leaving her extra work at the office so as to be able to focus her attention on her family.

A third strategy is to overlook or reduce the standards of role expectations (Dyk, 1987; Gray, 1983; Kater, 1985). This might include lowering one's standards for neatness in the home or for performance in the work role.

A number of other strategies which do not fall strictly within the Type I or Type II categories have also been outlined. Dyk (1987) identifies time management skills as capable of enhancing Type I and Type II coping strategies. These skills include:

> the ability to identify long-range and short-range priorities; consistent inclusion of important but not urgent tasks on a daily basis rather than procrastination (exercise, journal reading, household maintenance); coordination of priorities with those of other members of your role set (spouse, children, boss, major professor); and awareness of one's own biological time clock and periods of peak efficiency and scheduling tasks accordingly. (p. 331)

Dyk also stresses the importance of learning how to assess and allocate appropriate amounts of time for performing various kinds of tasks. Nickols and Metzen (1982) have also suggested that the methods used by professionals to manage their time efficiently might provide women with an additional response to coping with multiple roles.

The enhancement of communication skills is another strategy which has been suggested. Kater (1985) states that "couples who communicate as independent individuals in an intimate relationship respond rather than react to one another" (p. 76). Here, reacting refers to behaving as one believes his or her partner would like them to, whereas responding involves taking the partner's position into account without it being the primary reason for one's behavior. Kater also emphasizes the importance of communication occurring within an atmosphere of trust, where neither partner will attempt to control the behavior of the other.

The existence of effective communication skills provides the basis for another strategy referred to as life planning (Kater, 1985). Kater describes this

as including career planning for each partner, family planning, and the negotiation of conflicting transition points in each partner's career. The timing of these transition points and those in the family life cycle are crucial in minimizing the stresses associated with participating in multiple roles. In addition:

> each partner can be encouraged to engage in personal career assessment including clarification of values, identification of interests and skills, and the setting of career goals. With this individual goal setting, each partner operates from a position of comparative clarity which provides a base from which to negotiate toward equitable and mutual goals for the couple. . . Goals for the family should be based on what is important to each person and to the system as a whole. (Kater, 1985, p. 78)

Gilbert et al. (1981) also suggest the use of a four-step model to assist women in dual-earner couples with the management of role conflicts. First, women are encouraged to identify and differentiate internal and external aspects of their role conflict at both the societal and familial level. Internal factors might include self-confidence, attitudes concerning life roles, and level of career commitment. Relevant external factors might involve degree of flexibility in work hours, career advancement opportunities, and level of spousal support.

Second, women are encouraged to examine the influence of social roles and norms on their lives and to become aware of the relationship between sociological and psychological factors. Gilbert et al. (1981) suggest that this could be accomplished by helping women to discern differences between what they have been taught and have accepted as socially appropriate in a given situation and what may in fact be more appropriate.

Third, both partners in a dual-earner couple should outline what they feel to be major and minor parental role responsibilities. They should also describe

who they feel should fulfill each responsibility (i.e., they themselves, their partner, other family members, outside help, etc.) and the willingness and/or ability of these various groups to fulfill these responsibilities. Gilbert et al. (1981) suggest that through this exercise, crucial aspects of the parental role can be clarified and realistic role redefinitions enhanced.

Finally, dual-earner families can be informed about the various facilities available to assist with parental role responsibilities. If few reliable facilities are available, couples can be encouraged to explore new ways in which to fulfill parental role demands.

Nickols and Metzen (1982) also stress that educational and counseling programs designed to assist in the management of role conflicts should view employment and housework as a unity -- a group of productive activities which both partners contribute to, rather than focusing on individual roles for each partner. They suggest that encouraging couples to examine their time allocation decisions may motivate them to overcome some of the obstacles that allow traditional roles to persist.

With regard to the coping strategies that have been outlined, two additional comments should be made. First, as suggested by Dyk (1987), an individual's ability to implement these strategies will depend on the resources that he or she has available. Such resources include adequate finances for child care, housekeeping, or eating out; family members' ability to share household and transportation responsibilities; a flexible work schedule; a flexible, supportive work supervisor; peer support and interaction; and financial aid.

A second point involves, as mentioned earlier, taking steps to anticipate role strains that may arise within one's own situation and developing flexible strategies for dealing with potential role conflicts (Gray, 1983). This may include

developing tentative arrangements with other parents, neighbors, or teenagers to provide emergency transportation or child care (Dyk, 1987).

In summarizing the natural science literature on work-family role conflict, it is evident that this body of literature is replete with studies that emphasize explanation and exclude an understanding of the experiences of individuals who encounter work-family role conflict. Natural science researchers have tended to ask "why" questions as opposed to "what" questions. Researchers fail to examine the meaning of work-family role conflict for women and therefore largely overlook the experiential aspect of the phenomenon. Thus, despite the large body of literature in this area, meaningful results have been limited and dialogue between the natural scientific study of work-family role conflict and individuals' experiences of the phenomenon has been minimal.

From a phenomenological perspective, the natural science research is also limited by its emphasis on content and its deemphasis of context and relational factors. Moreover, this research begins from limited perspectives which results in the generation of isolated bits of information and a fragmented picture of the phenomenon.

Partly as a result of the above-mentioned shortcomings, the findings of quantitative investigations of work-family role conflict are often equivocal. The problems associated with the use of this approach are compounded by the fact that there has been a wide variation in the instruments used in different studies to measure interrole conflict and that many of these measures have used either open-ended questions or brief closed-ended scales, with little attention having been directed at developing measures with adequate construct validity (Kopelman, Greenhaus, & Connolly, 1983). Piotrkowski and Repetti (1984) add that despite recent research efforts such as the use of increasingly sophisticated designs and data analysis techniques such as longitudinal studies, within-

group analyses, and more precise and direct measures of theoretically important predictors, "at times, we appear to be at sea in a mass of empirical data without a theoretical rudder" (p. 112).

Qualitative Research on Work-Family Role Conflict

The second, more recent line of research on work-family role conflict differs in several important ways from the natural science research that has been described (Piotrkowski & Repetti, 1983). First, researchers have adopted a more sympathetic attitude toward women's employment and career involvement. The dual-earner family is viewed not only as acceptable and viable but as also a desirable movement toward greater equality between both genders. Second, researchers have examined complex processes as opposed to isolating single predictor and outcome variables. Third, researchers have utilized an explicitly developmental perspective in order to examine the interaction of family, individual, and occupational careers. Last, qualitative research in this area has been marked by the use of both qualitative methods of data collection and analysis and small, non-representative samples.

Earlier qualitative studies (Piotrkowski, 1979; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1965, 1971, 1976) have been influential in defining the research agenda within the work-family research domain and the studies cited in this section can generally be described as exploratory, inductive investigations. In keeping with the same format used to discuss the natural science literature, qualitative studies that address the family domain will be discussed first.

Family Domain

A number of studies have found that the demands of work and family roles resulted in members of dual-earner couples experiencing role overload (Heckman, Bryson, & Bryson, 1977; Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976). Moreover, Rapoport & Rapoport (1971, 1976) found that role overload

occurred because domestic work had to be handled as "overtime". Rapoport and Rapoport (1976) found that the "pressure of time" was experienced by all of the dual-career couples in their study. Similarly, many of the subjects in the Heckman et al. (1977) study felt that they had insufficient time and energy to do everything that needed to be done and that beyond work and family, there was little free time for anything else. Many felt that performing satisfactorily in one area meant that another area necessarily suffered.

In terms of the extent of role sharing in dual-earner couples, Yogev (1981) found that both groups of women that were studied -- those with children and those without -- estimated that their husbands spent much less time in housework than they themselves did (16.0 and 12.2 fewer weekly hours, respectively). What was surprising, however, was that only several women felt that their husbands were not doing enough of the housework. These results do not support the egalitarian pattern but rather, are congruent with the traditional relationship in which housework and child care are largely women's responsibility. Thus, the traditional division of labor in these dual-earner couples exists "not only because the husbands might be resistant and reluctant to increase their participation in housework and child care, but also because the women do not want or expect their husbands to share these responsibilities equally" (p. 868).

This is consistent with the finding by Heckman et al. (1977) that despite an intellectual awareness of the unequal division of domestic responsibilities, some couples in the study seemed to do nothing about it. As in the Rapoport and Rapoport (1969) study, many women accepted as inevitable that they would have to bear the main portion of household and child care responsibilities.

Yogev (1981) attempts to explain this pattern of unequal sharing by employing the idea of an identity tension line, a term first introduced by Rapoport and Rapoport (1971). Identity tension line refers to the degree to which individuals are able to move toward establishing their ideal new gender roles before reaching the point of discomfort (i.e., when individual perceptions of self-esteem become threatened by the new behaviors). Yogev argues that in order to avoid crossing identity tension lines and to maintain a happy marital situation, women maintain a traditional pattern of unequal sharing of household work and child care responsibilities. Yogev adds that in so doing, career-oriented women are able to reduce feelings of achieving "too much" or of having gone "too far". Thus, because traditional roles and obligations are not discarded, their achievement is legitimized. Yogev also adds that although there are limits to how far today's professional women can move beyond traditional gender role stereotypes, these limitations may be surpassed by professional women in the future.

Several other studies, however, expose an additional dimension of unequal role sharing. Hood (1983) found that the women in her study delegated tasks but tended to retain responsibility for overseeing the operation of the household. The majority of these women were successful in relinquishing responsibility for household tasks only by being absent when tasks had to be done. Similarly, Rapoport and Rapoport (1976) found that typically, one or both members of the dual-career couples that they studied experienced some level of distress over delegating intimate tasks (e.g., preparing a meal, ironing a shirt, etc.) or lowering domestic standards. These "non-rational elements" often resulted in a build-up of tension within the family system.

Another area within the family domain which has been investigated involves stage of life. Heckman et al. (1977) found that in some cases, women reported that the demands of both family and work roles were so great that they left the workforce or delayed work until their children were older. Similarly, Hood (1983) found that having young children and high standards for performing work and family roles were the two most significant factors in predicting role overload. Poloma, Pendleton, and Garland (1981) found that women's professional careers were influenced significantly by the presence of children. They concluded that given current cultural norms, it is "virtually impossible for married career women with children to have career lines like those of their male counterparts" (p. 220). Marriage alone produces difficulties for career-oriented women and the combination of marriage and children results in a "highly dysfunctional and pressure-prone situation" (p. 221) for career women.

Work Domain

Several qualitative studies have addressed issues involving the work domain. Piotrkowski (1979) found that daily strains associated with the workplace resulted in negative carry-over into the family domain. More specifically, mental and physical fatigue resulted in personal depletion and decreased availability to other family members, thus straining family cohesion. Although this negative carry-over constitutes a strain-based form of work-family role conflict, it should be noted that it could also be viewed as a form of spillover. Piotrkowski adds that people's belief in the "myth of separate worlds" obscures the connections between work and family and encourages people to blame themselves and each other when their needs are not met rather than to recognize the influence of work involvement in interfering with the fulfillment of these needs. Similar findings were made by Rapoport and Rapoport (1969),

who found that members of dual-career couples had demanding work roles and reported feeling physically depleted after work and having little energy left for extra activities at home.

In terms of level of work involvement, Piotrkowski (1979) also found that extra work involvement aimed at supplementing the family's income could also cause family strain.

Consequences

Several studies have found that role overload resulted in wives experiencing conflicts, physical and psychological strains, exhaustion, anxieties, and guilt (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976). Piotrkowski (1979) also found that tensions and role conflicts were "absorbed" by families and expressed in the form of intrapersonal and interpersonal strain.

A loss of quality of life has also been identified as a consequence of role overload (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976). All of the couples in the Rapoport and Rapoport (1976) study complained of the lack of "play", leisure activities, and free time in the family system.

Studies have also identified spillover occurring as a result of role conflicts (Crouter, 1984; Heckman et al., 1977; Piotrkowski, 1979; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969). For example, Crouter (1984) found that women with young children (twelve years of age and under) experienced high levels of spillover from family to work. More specifically, these women were the most likely to experience high levels of negative spillover in the form of absenteeism, inefficiency, tardiness, inattentiveness, or an inability to take on new work responsibilities. Additionally, in the Heckman et al. (1977) study, some individuals viewed bringing work problems home as a source of problems within their marriages.

A final consequence of work-family role conflict identified in the literature involves the impact of the dual-career lifestyle upon children. Dual-career couples in the Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) study reported that their children displayed greater independence and resourcefulness. The children's assistance with family tasks was viewed as giving them a sense not only of independence and competence but of social worth as well. Rapoport and Rapoport (1976) also found that children sometimes used their mother's employment as a means of evoking her guilt by stating that they preferred living at their grandmother's house or a non-working mother's house.

Coping Strategies

A variety of coping strategies have been outlined in the qualitative literature. Studies have found that couples coped by accepting a lower standard for maintenance of the household (Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976); delegating work to paid outside help and other family members (Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969, 1971, 1976); making use of labor-saving devices and time management skills (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976); and planning family leisure time (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969, 1971).

Some of the women in the Hood (1983) study also coped by leaving tasks undone until their spouses assumed responsibility for doing them. Hood emphasizes, however, that "going on strike" is unlikely to be effective in bringing about a permanent reallocation of responsibility for tasks unless the wife's work schedule results in her absence when household tasks must be done. Interestingly, Hood also found that half of the couples in her study used avoidance as a coping strategy and actively avoided conflict with their spouses.

Coping strategies which address some aspect of the work domain have also been identified. Couples may attempt to cope with role conflicts by avoiding additional work involvement so as to optimize both partners'

participation in work and family domains (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969, 1976); not bringing work home (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971); reducing their level of work involvement (Hood, 1983); leaving the workforce temporarily (Hood, 1983); and disengaging from work after work hours (Piotrkowski, 1979). With respect to this last coping strategy, Piotrkowski adds that individuals' attempts to minimize the strains experienced at work and the carry-over of these feelings to the family domain by disengagement from their work can be only partially successful. More specifically, Piotrkowski argues that individuals are unaware of and unable to control some of the influences of work on their emotional well-being (e.g., personal depletion and energy deficit). Piotrkowski also adds that disengagement from work (e.g., not discussing work while at home) may be detrimental to other family members and family relationships by creating communication gaps between employed individuals and other family members. As an additional coping strategy, Piotrkowski suggests that education about the impact of work life on family life may provide families with a greater range of options and help them make more knowledgeable choices.

Other strategies used by couples to negotiate explicit agreements include clarifying the relative priorities of each partner's family and work roles (Hood, 1983); mutual communication of wants and needs and discussion of the implications of each partner's wants and needs for the other's well-being and that of the family (Hood, 1983); discussion of short and long term costs and benefits of major life decisions for both partners (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976); and joint planning, where both partners engage in equitable exchanges of advantages (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976).

From the qualitative studies examined in this section, it is evident that qualitative research has made significant contributions to the area of work-family role conflict. Nevertheless, several shortcomings are evident. First, the

vast majority of research has been focused on dual-career families, with little attention having been paid to families in which parents are engaged in work which does not constitute a career. Aldous (1981) suggests that the emphasis on dual-career couples represents both a lack of awareness of the prevalence of working-class women and a narcissistic bent on the part of dual-career researchers. However, Rapoport and Rapoport's (1969, 1971) theoretical rationale for their focus involves the belief that the dual-career family represents a pioneering lifestyle which offers researchers a unique glimpse into the future. Yet, the proportion of employed adults in dual-earner families who have careers is relatively low and will probably remain so in the near future (Piotrkowski & Repetti, 1984). Moreover, Piotrkowski and Repetti add that without empirical evidence to the contrary, it cannot be assumed that the results of studies of dual-career families can readily be generalized to other types of dual-earner families.

Second, although qualitative studies have improved upon natural science studies by examining the experiential aspect of work-family role conflict, they are not phenomenological in nature. More specifically, none of these studies involved the use of the phenomenological method to examine the experience of work-family role conflict, nor did any of them attempt to reveal the essence of this experience.

In summarizing the quantitative and qualitative research in this area, Piotrkowski and Repetti (1984) stress the necessity of verifying and clarifying disparate findings. They also advocate

> systematic attention to underlying processes and inclusion of outcomes that can represent the balance of long-term and short-term costs and benefits in various parts of the family system and at different points in the

> family life cycle. . . . Only a sensitivity to such dynamics can move us beyond the simple question with no answer. (p. 116-117)

The purpose of this study, then, is to investigate women's lived experiences of work-family role conflict in dual-earner couples. The present study will build on the vast body of quantitative research by offering what is felt to be a much needed complementary approach. It is important to emphasize the complementary nature of quantitative and qualitative research, as each is best suited for answering a particular type of question. The present study will also build on existing qualitative literature by including women from dual-earner families and by attempting to expose the deeper structures of the phenomenon. More importantly, however, this study will undertake a phenomenological investigation of work-family role conflict using procedures which, to the present researcher's knowledge, have not been used in the research thus far. This study therefore offers a unique opportunity to gain an understanding of the essence of the phenomenon. By exploring the meaning of the phenomenon for the coresearchers in the study, our understanding of the phenomenon of work-family role conflict should be enhanced.

In the chapter that follows, the phenomenological method is compared to the natural science method of conducting research in psychology. The phenomenological method is also evaluated with respect to such important issues as validity, reliability, and generalizability.

Chapter Two

Metatheoretical Considerations

This study uses a phenomenological method to investigate women's experiences of work-family role conflict in dual-earner couples. This method, referred to as human science methodology, differs from the natural science methodology used by mainstream psychology. The philosophical assumptions underlying both approaches are also radically different and sometimes diametrically opposed.

Philosophical Assumptions of Natural Science Research in Psychology

The natural science approach has its origins in the philosophy of Descartes, who initiated modern philosophy and was one of the founders of seventeenth-century science. His philosophy brought to near completion the dualism of mind and matter which had originated with Plato and had been developed by Christian philosophy (Russell, 1985). Within the Cartesian system, man is viewed as possessing a dual nature; he is both a "self-thinking substance" (i.e., mind or consciousness) and an "extended substance" (i.e., matter) (Luijpen, 1969). Moreover, these two substances are distinct and independently separate entities: mind is unextended and indivisible, whereas matter is extended and divisible. Descartes also believed that only matter, which is extended and quantitative, could be the proper subject of an exact science. His formulation began the first scientific revolution and his conception of the ultimate quantifiability of physical phenomena has remained a paradigm within the natural sciences. As the natural sciences evolved over time, they also came to be characterized by experimentation and measurement.

This experimental approach was adopted by Wundt, the founder of modern or experimental psychology. Since then, experimental psychology has

proceeded by using experimental methodology, guided by the assumption that in order to be considered genuinely scientific it must use the methods of science. As a result, an absolutistic view developed, whereby "only the scientific method could be used for the proper study of psychological phenomena" (Giorgi, 1971, p. 8).

Research in psychology has therefore come to mean experimentation: an application of the scientific method to study psychological phenomena and their comprehension in the light of that method. Thus, psychology, when conceived of as a natural science, has been characterized as being empirical, positivistic, quantitative, deterministic, reductionistic, analytic, predictive, and involving independent observation (Giorgi, 1970, 1971). Psychological phenomena which resist conforming to these criteria (e.g., love, creativity, joy, etc.) have traditionally been avoided by the experimental psychologist.

Experimentation in experimental psychology involves the formulation of hypotheses in order to predict cause-effect relationships between entities or variables (Valle & King, 1978). Under controlled conditions such as exist in a laboratory, the experimenter can systematically vary the independent variables and observe the effect of this manipulation upon dependent variables. The ultimate aim of such research is to produce laws that will enable the prediction and control of behavior. However, the experimental psychologist's preoccupation with measurement in experimentation has resulted in the meaning aspect of phenomena being largely ignored. Consequently, traditional psychology's development has been described as "lopsided", with highly developed measurement techniques and underdeveloped means of assessing meaning (Giorgi, 1971).

By ignoring this meaning aspect of phenomena and attempting to obtain "subject-free", objective knowledge, it has been suggested that psychology has

"provided us with sterile and artificial categories as a base for knowledge and has led to anomalies in our comprehension" (Polkinghorne, 1981, p. 1). Implicit in experimental psychology's quest for objective knowledge, then, is the assumption that the subject and his or her environment are separate and distinct -- an assumption which phenomenology rejects and seeks to replace with a more inclusive paradigm.

Philosophical Assumptions of Phenomenological Research in Psychology

The phenomenological approach to research is based on existential phenomenological thought, which has its origins in both phenomenology and existential philosophy (Valle & King, 1978). Perhaps the most important philosophical difference between phenomenological research and natural science research involves the existential-phenomenological view that we are in and of the world (Colaizzi, 1978). That is, the individual is not viewed as merely an object in the world but as forming an inseparable unity with it. The individual therefore has no existence apart from the world and the world has no existence apart from the individual. The individual and his or her world are said to "co-constitute" one another (Valle & King, 1978). The meaning of the individual's existence emerges only within the context of the world and vice versa. Talk of one in the absence of the other is therefore meaningless. It is because of this interdependency that existential phenomenological thought views existence as involving "being-in-the-world" rather than simply "being" (Valle & King, 1978). In this way, existential phenomenology is able to avoid the subject-object dualism of natural science and the extreme positions of realism and idealism.

Phenomenology's subject matter, then, is the world as experienced by the individual. Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, referred to this world as the Lebenswelt. It is "the everyday world as it is lived by all of us prior to

explanations and theoretical interpretations of any kind" (Giorgi, 1975, p. 99). The Lebenswelt, or life-world as it is commonly referred to, is given directly and immediately in our experience and is therefore the starting point of existential-phenomenological thought (Valle & King, 1978). Husserl's famous maxim "unto the things themselves" reflected his belief in the importance of using lived experience as phenomenology's starting point. The life-world, then, is not a construction and no assumptions are made as to its cause or origin. Thus, natural science concepts such as hypotheses and theories are not part of the life-world per se. They are not part of our direct and immediate experience but rather, are derivatives of the life-world and therefore not part of the subject matter of the phenomenological researcher (Valle & King, 1978).

The task of the phenomenological researcher, then, is to study people's experiences as they occur in the everyday world. In accomplishing this, phenomenological research adopts a critical, descriptive approach as opposed to the explanatory and primarily quantitative approach of experimental psychology (Seamon, 1982).

Phenomenological researchers have challenged the natural science approach to psychology and stressed the importance of existential-phenomenological thought for all aspects of psychology. The implications of removing natural science methodology from its prominent position in psychological research are broad, as outlined by Giorgi (1971):

> The overall effect, therefore, of the phenomenological critique of the way experimental psychology has been practiced is to free psychology from artificial boundaries and restrictions in terms of the number and kinds of phenomena that can be studied, and also in the ways in which these phenomena can be approached. This freedom in turn will permit a new period of growth and development for psychology. (p. 14)

Evaluation of the Phenomenological Method

Prior to adopting a methodology, the researcher must engage in a critical evaluation of his or her method in order to determine if it is the most suitable for the research question(s) being asked. From a natural science perspective, evaluation typically involves a consideration of such criteria as validity, reliability, and generalizability. However, in evaluating the phenomenological method using these traditional criteria, it must be borne in mind that this method is based upon different metatheoretical assumptions than those underlying natural science methodology (Wertz, 1986).

Validity

The issue of validity is an important one for the researcher engaged in any form of scientific research. From an experimental psychological perspective, it refers to how well a measure represents what it is intended to (i.e., to what extent does the measuring instrument actually measure the hypothesized variable?), whereas in phenomenological research it involves the issue of researcher bias. More specifically, in phenomenological research the crucial issue is whether the researcher's description accurately represents the coresearcher's lived-experience of the phenomenon (Wertz, 1984). Giorgi (1975) refers to this as "fidelity to the phenomenon" as lived by the coresearcher.

There are four main ways in which to determine the validity of the researcher's interpretations and descriptions in phenomenological research. First, the researcher "brackets" or suspends his or her preconceptions, beliefs, and biases regarding the phenomenon prior to beginning any data analysis. The ultimate goal of this procedure is to foster greater openness and receptivity on the part of the researcher to the phenomenon as it is actually expressed by the coresearcher. This process of self-reflection is continual, occurring over the

entire course of the research study and is meant to bring objectivity to the investigation. Objectivity, from a phenomenological perspective, is fidelity to the phenomenon and is characterized by "a refusal to tell the phenomenon what it is, but a respectful listening to what the phenomenon speaks of itself" (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 52).

The achievement of complete objectivity or presuppositionless description is unrealistic, however, as some interpretation is inevitable. Despite the fact that bracketing is never complete, validity can be further enhanced through the researcher's explicit statement of those presuppositions which are known to exist. By making explicit the researcher's context or perspective regarding the data, more "control" can be achieved in the study. More specifically, a reader is able to understand how the researcher arrived at his or her interpretation of the data, irrespective of whether or not the interpretation is agreed with (Giorgi, 1975).

Second, the researcher can verify interpretations with coresearchers. That is, the researcher consults each coresearcher to determine if the interpretation accurately reflects his or her experience of the phenomenon. It is important to note, however, that factors such as coresearchers' defensiveness can result in valid interpretations being rejected (Osborne, 1990). Consequently, this form of validity assessment is not definitive.

Third, the researcher uses coherent and persuasive arguments to substantiate his or her particular interpretation of the data (Osborne, 1990). This method of validation is considered the most crucial and is used commonly in scientific research. As Gergen (1985) explains, scientific research is governed to a large extent by the normative rules of that community. The use of natural science or any other methodology does not "increase the 'objective validity' of the resulting constructions" (p. 273) but only allows the researcher to

make a more compelling case. Thus, rhetoric plays an important role in all forms of research.

Finally, the validity of the interpretation can be determined by the extent to which it is consistent with the experiences of other individuals who have experienced the phenomenon but who are not part of the study (Shapiro, 1986).

Reliability

The experimental psychologist generally conceives of reliability in terms of consistency, precision, replicability, and stability of measurement. Moreover, he or she is concerned with the achievement of reliability as it relates to facts. In contrast, the phenomenological approach to reliability focuses upon meaning rather than facts. That is, reliability is based upon invariant meaning which arises from variations in perspectives and facts. Thus, although variations may occur in the factual details of the data, their meaning may remain invariant. Wertz (1986) views variations in individual perspectives as analogous to binocular disparity in providing depth. The criterion used for reliability in phenomenological research, then, is "persistence of meaning through the factual variations" (Wertz, 1986, p. 200).

Generalizability

Generalizability, like validity and reliability, is viewed differently by natural science and phenomenological methodologies. Natural science research seeks statistical generalizability whereas phenomenological research aims at empathic generalizability. Within natural science research, generalizability is based upon statistical explanatory procedures, whereas in phenomenological research it is based upon empathic understanding (Osborne, 1990). Thus, if the description of a person's experience resonates with the experiences of others, it has empathic generalizability. Generalizability

in phenomenological research is therefore established a posteriori as opposed to a priori (Osborne, 1990).

In the following chapter, aspects of the particular phenomenological method used in this study are discussed. The present researcher's presuppositions and beliefs in beginning the study are also described.

Chapter Three

Methodology

In choosing a research methodology, the researcher must determine which approach will be most appropriate for answering the research question. As mentioned in the literature review, natural science studies of work-family role conflict focus on only one aspect of the phenomenon. Consequently, the picture of the phenomenon which emerges is fragmented and incomplete. Similarly, the qualitative studies in this area also present an inadequate picture of the phenomenon.

Phenomenological methodology, with its emphasis on meaning and understanding individual experiences of a phenomenon, seemed a valuable approach for gaining greater insight into the phenomenon under investigation. The phenomenological approach uses first person descriptions of how the phenomenon is experienced and may therefore provide us with a greater understanding of women's experiences of work-family role conflict. Moreover, I wished to investigate and understand women's experiences of work-family role conflict in their entirety as opposed to narrowing my focus to one aspect of the phenomenon. For these reasons, it was felt that phenomenological research methodology was the most appropriate for the present study.

Wertz (1984) outlines three phenomenologically-oriented approaches to psychological research: the comprehensive theoretical, the phenomenal, and the reflective empirical. The comprehensive theoretical approach is almost purely conceptual and attempts to integrate existing psychological theories into a more comprehensive theoretical framework through the use of lived world descriptions and phenomenologically-oriented reflections. The major shortcoming of this approach, however, is its lack of procedures for analyzing lived experiences.

The phenomenal approach strives to abstain from any presuppositions and to understand phenomena solely through their expression in empirical data. No interpretation is used and data analysis is confined to explicit statements in the description, with the result that the researcher's involvement is minimal. The phenomenal researcher simply presents the full range of reported constituents of the phenomenon without assessing their meaning or relative importance. As a result of the researcher's inability to "make sense" of the data, descriptions appear sterile and "are therefore far from faithful to the phenomenon" (Wertz, 1984, p. 31).

In contrast, the reflective empirical approach is interpretive and goes beyond the phenomenal approach by explicitly using the researcher's capacity to reflect on the data. The reflective empirical researcher strives to disclose the meaning of the constituents of a phenomenon and their relationship to the essential structure of the phenomenon. However, it should be stressed that the researcher is not imposing meaning because:

> reflection is not speculation but genuine finding, requiring the most rigorous grasp of the essence of the phenomenon. The researcher thereby grasps the whole of the phenomenon through the part expressed by the subject, making explicit the implicit root of the matter. (Wertz, 1984, p. 32)

The reflective empirical approach, because of its emphasis on reflection and disclosure of meaning, seemed the most appropriate for revealing the essence of the phenomenon under investigation in this study.

Bracketing My Presuppositions and Beliefs

Prior to beginning data collection and analysis, I reflected on how I came to be interested in my particular research topic (which I have described in the introduction to Chapter One). I then bracketed my presuppositions regarding

the phenomenon. In the remainder of this section, I present my foreunderstanding of the experience of work-family role conflict for women in dual-earner couples. Such an awareness is crucial in that it allows for suspension of the researcher's presuppositions and biases and a fresh immersement in the lived experience of the participants (Wertz, 1984).

Historically, women as a group have often been oppressed and denied basic rights. Even today, despite significant social change, women still experience inequality and prejudice both at work and at home. I consider myself to be non-traditional in my gender role attitudes and view traditional roles as restricting women in their efforts to grow as individuals. I also believe that traditional relationships can oppress women by not providing them with the financial independence to assert themselves within their marriages or to end unsatisfying relationships.

Despite recent trends toward more equitable role sharing, women still perform a larger share of domestic work. Moreover, married women's employment generally results in only a slight increase in their husbands' contributions to domestic work. I believe that this inequity exists because many of these men either believe that it is their wives' responsibility to assume these tasks or feel uncomfortable or self-conscious about performing domestic work. I also believe that these men's attitudes are not a result of self-centeredness but rather, are a product of their gender role socialization and reflect values which are embedded in our culture.

I believe that because of the existing inequity in role sharing, many women in dual-earner couples are overburdened and under considerable stress. I also believe that women -- particularly those who are in the same age group as the women in this study (i.e., 30 to 40 years of age) -- are torn between their desire to work in order to feel fulfilled and their desire to be more involved

in their parental and spousal roles. I believe that this problem is also a result of gender role socialization.

Additionally, I believe that there is ambivalence within our own society regarding the role of women. It appears to encourage women to pursue jobs or careers and develop themselves and to simultaneously criticize and disapprove of women who "neglect" their families.

As mentioned earlier, awareness of one's presuppositions and biases is necessary because it is from this perspective that one views and interprets the data. As Polkinghorne (1981) explains, the researcher "must cleanse himself/herself of presuppositions . . . [in striving] to allow the modes and objects of consciousness to be seen as they are in their original appearance" (p. 6-7). However, interpretation is inevitable in that one can never be aware of all of one's presuppositions. It was therefore important for me to be aware of my biases regarding the phenomenon under investigation and to make every effort to suspend or bracket them so that I could be open to the coresearchers' lived experiences and let the data "show themselves".

Coresearcher Selection

The criteria used in selecting coresearchers is an important consideration for the phenomenological researcher. Most importantly, individuals are chosen who have experienced and can provide rich descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation. Generally, coresearchers are used who are open and willing to share their lived experiences of the phenomenon. The term coresearcher is used to emphasize both this shared interest in exploring the phenomenon and the voluntary nature of the research.

A number of other criteria which were specific to the phenomenon under investigation were also used in selecting appropriate coresearchers. In order to qualify for the study, individuals had to be female, members of the paid labor

force, and working full time. As mentioned earlier, women with either careers or jobs qualified for the study. They also had to be married, to be living with their husbands, and to have at least one child twelve years of age or younger. This last criterion was included because the stage of parenting involving young children (i.e., children twelve years of age and younger), when childcare demands are greatest, is likely to be associated with the highest levels of work-family role conflict, role overload, and family-to-work spillover for women (Crouter, 1984; Heckman et al., 1977; Hood, 1983). In contrast, older children (i.e., teenagers) may alleviate difficulties by assuming a portion of domestic responsibilities (Sekaran, 1985).

Women who qualified for the study were either known to the researcher or were referred by acquaintances. These potential coresearchers were contacted either by phone or in person to determine if they had experienced and could illuminate the phenomenon. Four women agreed to participate in the study, all of whom were felt to have had considerable experience with the phenomenon and ability to articulate their experiences.

In terms of the characteristics of the sample, the women were between 31 and 38 years of age, with an average age of 33.8 years. Two of the women were professionals (a teacher and an educational consultant), while the other two were not (a salesperson and an administrative assistant). The number of years that each woman had worked as a member of the paid labor force ranged from 14 to 21 years, with an average length of 16.8 years (10.5 years at full-time and 6.3 years at less than full-time). Their husbands were 32 to 42 years of age, with an average age of 37.8 years. Moreover, only one of the men was a professional and only one couple could be described as a dual-career couple. Three of the women were in their first marriage and all four women's present marriages ranged in length from 4 to 21 years, with an average length of 11.0

years. The number of children in each family ranged from 1 to 4, with an average of 2.2 children. Children were between 2 and 16 years of age, with an average age of 8.6 years.

Phenomenological methodology does not dictate the number of coresearchers that are required for a study; the researcher uses as many as are required to illuminate the phenomenon (Becker, 1986; Wertz, 1984). In the present study it was found that the data collected from four women was sufficient to provide a comprehensive view of the essential aspects of the phenomenon.

Procedure

The interview method was chosen as opposed to having coresearchers describe in written form their lived experiences of the phenomenon. There were several reasons for this choice. First, by using verbal descriptions I would also be able to attend to meaning inherent in body posture, degree of eye contact, tone, rate of speech, and level of expressed emotion, and therefore be exposed to the fullness of each coresearcher's communication. Second, it would also be possible to notice any omissions or concealments (Wertz, 1984), thereby affording me the opportunity to probe such areas further. Third, the interview allows for more development of rapport and greater interaction between the researcher and the coresearcher. Last, because of its dynamic, interpersonal nature, the interview "provides a human context that motivates the subject to take up the task of articulating complex, lived experiences" (Becker, 1986, p. 102).

Regardless of the specific procedure used in a phenomenological study, the most important consideration is the development of good rapport between the researcher and the coresearchers (Osborne, 1990). Without rapport and an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, coresearchers are unlikely to provide

genuine descriptions of their lived experiences (Polkinghorne, 1981; Osborne, 1990). Thus, by developing an atmosphere of trust in which no judgements are made of the coresearcher, he or she can be free to communicate the fullness of his or her lived experience of the phenomenon. Phenomenological researchers cite empathy, sensitivity, transparency, care, responsiveness, genuineness, playfulness, and curiosity as qualities which interviewers should possess (Becker, 1986).

The actual interview process involved three phases of interviewing: 1) the structuring interview, 2) the data gathering interview, and 3) the corroborative interview (Laferriere, cited in Becker, 1986). The first phase of interviewing was used to build rapport and to explain the nature and purpose of the study. I shared some of my own personal background and the reasons for my interest in the particular topic of the study. Confidentiality, informed consent, and the coresearchers' right to withdraw from the study at any time were also discussed and time was spent answering any questions that the coresearchers had. Each coresearcher was also given a consent form (for which ethical release was obtained from the Department of Educational Psychology) to sign and a letter outlining the study (see Appendix B).

The second phase interviews were used to gather data about each coresearcher's experience of the phenomenon. The interviews took place in a quiet setting which was free of any possible interruptions and comfortable for both participants. An open-ended, minimally structured interview format was used so as to avoid both directing the coresearchers' thoughts and asking questions that might have supported my biases. Moreover, the openness and flexibility of this approach allows the phenomenon to be explored in more depth and breadth and is therefore more likely to yield aspects of the phenomenon which might otherwise be missed (Polkinghorne, 1981; Osborne, 1990). In

addition to these considerations, however, the phenomenological researcher must also remember to allow the data to "speak for themselves".

Prior to beginning each interview, time was spent explaining the purpose of the minimally structured format of the interviews and answering any questions that the coresearcher had. This is important because it helps coresearchers to understand that their own particular experience of the phenomenon is what is most valuable to the interviewer (Becker, 1986).

I began initial data gathering interviews by stating: "I would like to hear what your experience of dealing with your roles as paid worker, mother, and wife has been like". In each interview I followed the conversational lead of the coresearcher and requested amplification or clarification where necessary. Additionally, the researcher only prompted the coresearcher when she no longer had anything to say. During interviews the phenomenological researcher must perform several paradoxical movements simultaneously. Becker (1986) describes the researcher's orientation as one of being "prepared, yet receptive; task-focused, yet personable; knowledgeable, yet naive" (p. 115).

Initial data gathering interviews were between 60 and 90 minutes in length. All four women were interviewed a second time, with interviews ranging from 30 to 90 minutes in length. Prior to leaving the initial data gathering interview, each coresearcher was asked to reflect further upon the phenomenon and to describe any additional insights during the second interview. Only two interviews were required with each of the coresearchers as this was found to be adequate to expose the various constituents of the phenomenon. All interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the coresearchers and later transcribed by the researcher. A transcript of one of the interviews has been included as an example in Appendix A. Excerpts taken from this transcript have

been underlined. Additionally, real names were changed, as were any details that might have identified the coresearcher.

The third phase interview involved checking my interpretation of the data with each coresearcher to determine if it reflected her experience. This is an important part of the research process because it constitutes one of the main ways in which the validity of the phenomenological researcher's interpretations is assessed. All of the women stated that they found this session to be interesting and informative. Several women also stated that they found the interviews to be therapeutic.

Data Analysis

There is no single way in which to conduct a phenomenological data analysis. The specific procedure which is adopted depends upon the researcher's purposes. The method of data analysis used in this study is that proposed by Giorgi (1975) and Colaizzi (1978). Listed below are the steps that were followed in analyzing the coresearchers' verbal descriptions of their experience of work-family role conflict.

1. Each interview was tape recorded and transcribed by myself. Careful attention was paid to such factors as the coresearcher's rate of speech, her tone of voice, and those experiences which were emphasized.

2. Each transcript was read in its entirety several times to get a sense of the person's entire experience of the phenomenon. Close attention was paid to the temporal order of experiences discussed, to repeated statements, and to the particular words that the coresearcher chose to describe her thoughts.

3. Phrases or sentences were extracted from each transcript which were revealing of an aspect of the person's experience of the phenomenon. Colaizzi (1978) refers to this process as "extracting significant statements". For example, one coresearcher stated: "And you always have this anxiety about: you're

gonna forget something really important. And once in a while you do". Additionally, statements in the transcript which were the same were extracted only once.

4. Two levels of interpretive abstraction were applied to each excerpt in formulating its meaning. The first level involves paraphrasing the meaning of the excerpt into psychological language. For example, the above mentioned excerpt was paraphrased as: "Experiences continual anxiety over possibility of forgetting an important commitment". The second level of interpretive abstraction involves formulating a theme which captures the essence of that particular excerpt. For example, the theme for the above mentioned excerpt was formulated as: "Psychological manifestations of extreme stress".

5. The themes (second level abstractions) were then clustered into more highly abstracted themes. For example, the above mentioned theme was included in a cluster whose theme was formulated as: "Manifestations of extreme stress". This cluster also included excerpts whose theme (second level abstraction) was: "Physical manifestations of extreme stress". These thematic clusters were validated by referring them back to the original transcripts. This involved determining whether the thematic clusters suggested anything which was not implied in the original transcripts and whether any aspect of the original transcripts was not accounted for in the thematic clusters (Colaizzi, 1978).

6. The results of the analysis were then synthesized into a comprehensive description of the person's experience of the phenomenon. This synthesis was written so as to state the fundamental structure of the phenomenon as unequivocally as possible. This analysis of each coresearcher's experience is referred to as a "within persons analysis".

7. I validated my analysis of each coresearcher's experience by consulting with her to determine if she agreed with my interpretation of the data.

These interviews were between one and two hours in length and involved validating the description of her experience. Any relevant new data or modifications suggested by the coresearcher were discussed and appropriate changes or additions made to the existing analysis.

8. The final thematic clusters for each coresearcher were compared in order to identify those themes which were shared by all four coresearchers. If the majority of coresearchers exhibited a particular aspect of the phenomenon, I contacted those coresearchers who had not alluded to this aspect of the phenomenon in order to determine if it was indeed a valid part of their experience. This procedure is necessary as some aspects of the phenomenon may not have been revealed during the data gathering interviews. The shared structure was integrated into an overall structural description of the phenomenon. It is this shared structure of experience which is most important in phenomenological research.

9. The shared themes were further clustered into more abstract themes, a procedure referred to as the "between persons analysis".

The data are presented in both tabular and written form in Chapter Four and follow the sequence of steps in the data analysis as outlined above.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

In the first section of this chapter, the individual descriptions of each of the coresearchers are presented. The descriptions include personal information; an analysis of each coresearcher's experience presented in tabular form; and an overall synthesis of each coresearcher's experience.

The individual descriptions are presented in the order in which the interviews were conducted. An overall synthesis of the experience shared by all of the coresearchers is then presented.

Elizabeth

Personal Information

Elizabeth is thirty eight years of age and employed full-time as a teacher. She has worked full-time for twelve years, half-time for five years, and has been in her present position for six years. She has been married for twenty one years and has four children. In terms of her family of origin, she is the second child of four and the oldest female. She describes her parents as being very traditional, with her mother having remained at home in a supportive, domestic role. She describes having experienced a great deal of negative pressure from her parents to remain at home when she made the decision to return to teaching while her first child was under a year of age. Her parents feel that she is doing "the wrong thing" by working and she feels that they often compare her parenting style and her children to those of non-working mothers.

The excerpts taken from the transcribed interviews with Elizabeth are presented in the first column of Table 1. They appear in the order in which they occurred in the interview transcript. The second column in Table 1 represents

the first level of interpretive abstraction and contains paraphrases, in psychological language, of the meaning of the excerpt. The themes which were formulated to reflect the essence of the excerpts (second level of interpretive abstraction) are presented in the third column. In Table 2, the themes (second level abstractions) are clustered into more abstract themes. The numbers which appear in brackets below each theme represent the specific excerpts from Table 1 which compose the thematic cluster. Following Table 2, the overall synthesis of Elizabeth's experience is presented.

Table 1
Thematic Abstraction of Elizabeth's Experience

	Excerpts From Protocols	Paraphrases	Themes
1.	. . . I really am quite competitive and it's important for me to do a good job. Not just an adequate job but a good job. . . . And I take pride in doing a job well.	Awareness of competitiveness; importance of doing things well.	High need to achieve[1]; perfectionism.
2.	Yet, when you're there [i.e., at work] you're wondering about your children. You know, are they being well taken care of? Is the sitter doing a good job?	Self-doubts and worry about quality of child care arrangements.	Anxiety about children.
3.	Maybe it's not the best environment [for the children] and you're often saying: are we allowing someone else to raise our children? Taking on the parenting role that we should be doing? And if we're not happy with it, why are we working? . . . And you have a guilt.	Self-doubts regarding whether parental role has been transferred to others evokes feelings of guilt.	Anxiety/guilt about absence.
4.	If my kids don't turn out right is it because I was a working mom? If they have problems in school is it because I didn't spend time reading with them or doing little educational activities with them to get them ready for school?	Self-doubts, worry, and anxiety over possible negative impact that her working may have on her children.	Anxiety/guilt about absence and impact on children.
5.	If the children get sick, the question is: do I take the day off work to stay home with them or do I just take them to the sitter and drop them off and say: tough luck kid? . . . Then do you play the role where you say: gee, I'm not feeling well, so you take a sick leave for yourself, which is stretching the truth somewhat? . . . So there's a conflict there of ethics as well in many cases that shouldn't come through but they do.	Experiences a dilemma of choice between parental and work roles when a child is ill; creates an ethical conflict.	Demands of children vs. demands of work.
6.	My children are in kindergarten right now and because I have twins, twice a month I have to be on the roster. And that is an incredible burden for time, trying to find the time and trying to find someone who can appear at the kindergarten with a snack and be there to do all the little things that are so important.	Experiences large demands on her time as a result of having two children in kindergarten.	Overload and frustration.

[1]Need to achieve refers to the desire to attain a standard of excellence, where the individual is impelled toward attempting to meet internalized standards of personal achievement or fulfillment (Reber, 1988).

7.	The school puts pressure on you because they say it's such an important day for the kids. It's their special day. It's your time to be with them and you know, the guilt is really - the screws are really being turned.	Feels pressure from children's school to fulfill duties at the school; experiences guilt.	Other-directedness[2], guilt.
8.	. . . they [i.e., employer] are not very positive about or very supportive of parents who have young children and need to spend time with children.	Perceives employer as unsupportive of working parents.	Lack of support from employer.
9.	. . . the last five years, teaching has really changed. It's almost become more of a negative thing, whereas we take on more and more roles . . . And as we take on more of this role, the demands are increasing and yet the accountability is always there.	Feelings of being overburdened with the increasing demands of her job.	Pressures of work.
10.	And so we've really changed a bit with the next, the little ones now. Trying to spend more time with them and pulling back a bit. Knowing as well that doing so is creating a negative ripple in the schoc'.	Tries to spend more time with her children; decision has a negative impact on work role.	Children vs. work.
11.	And two years ago I was doing four extracurricular activities. I was going insane. . . . I was going wild. And it just had to give. So I began to pull back in some things.	Feelings of desperation and frustration as a result of workload; decreased her level of involvement in extra work activities.	Stress management - decreasing workload in order to cope.
12.	Field trips: why can't you come along? Other people's moms can. . . . And it's almost like a contest between your work and your child.	Experiences unresolvable conflict between demands of parental and work roles when children ask her to attend school outings.	Demands of children vs. demands of work.
13.	And at some times the children see it as a competition and they resent it.	Children resentful as a result of feeling they are competing with her job for her time.	Children reacting to competing.
14.	And you're getting this feedback [from your children] that most moms have time to be at home and can do the housework: I don't have to do it.	Children feel that she should be home more often to do housework.	Children reacting to her absence.
15.	[When your children make such comments] . . . you feel totally inadequate. You feel that you've been a failure as a parent. . . . And guilt. Enormous amounts of guilt. And then what you do is you try to undo that. . . . And so you go wild trying to prove to them that they're really not really being found wanting. So it's - for a while there and then you	Feelings of inadequacy and failure as a parent and guilt; attempts to compensate by taking on added household duties but eventually recognizes that this is unrealistic.	Placating children; overcompensation.

[2]Other-directedness is defined as the tendency to be overly sensitized to others' expectations and preferences (Reber, 1988).

just say: I can't maintain this forever. This is stupid. It's not realistic. Other kids have to help out too.		
16. . . . my husband would say the same thing: we never have time alone or you never want to do anything.	Spouse feels that she lacks time for or interest in their relationship.	Spouse vs. work.
17. If we do have an evening at home, he [i.e., spouse] will say: do you want to watch a movie? Well, watching movies is not a big thing for me. So I'll say no. I'll go read in one of my books and to the point where he hates books and begins to resent that.	Spousal resentment of her unwillingness to compromise and spend time together.	Power struggle.
18. But you want to do everything well so everyone thinks you've done it well and that they think good of you. And I really want to create that impression.	Expresses a desire to do everything well in order to gain others' approval.	Other-directedness.
19. I've sort of been fairly independent, earning my own way. And that's been important to me, having my own bank account and not being beholden to my husband. And that's important; that's probably kept me working.	Views work as important for establishing her independence; unwillingness to be dependent on spouse.	Need to individuate[3]; fear of dependency.
20. He [i.e., spouse] has been really there and that's been great. And then especially when I've been really stressed out and panicking, he's managed to take some pressure off and to keep things on an even keel. . . . So he's been a big part of me being able to handle much of it. I don't know if I could do it without him being like that.	Perceives spouse as supportive and important to her ability to cope.	Supportive spouse.
21. And I'll grumble and growl and he [i.e., spouse] will walk around and pick up his clothes for a bit then . . . and things are good for a day or two and then - he's just never been trained to and never had to do it.	Views spouse's contribution to housework as temporary and induced by her appeals for assistance.	Criticism of spouse.
22. They [i.e., children] have had to be quite independent. . . . In comparison to some of their friends, they're much more grown up and maybe they've lost some of their irresponsible years.	Views children as having had to be independent and more mature than their peers as a result of her working.	Positive rationalization[4].
23. I'm not sure my husband could handle it if I wasn't around. The farmwork, fine,	Views spouse as incompetent in performing household	Criticism of spouse; need to control.

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[3]Need to individuate is defined as the need to become an individual who possesses an awareness of his or her individuality (Reber, 1988).

[4]Rationalization refers to an individual's use of a rational, logical explanation for behavior or thoughts that are anxiety-evoking (Hergenhahn, 1984).

that's not a problem. But the household, he'd destroy things.	tasks.	
24. But I think the part is how his mom brought him up and I allowed him to stay in that [traditional] role and didn't expect him to come out of it.	Awareness of spouse's traditional socialization and allowing him to remain in a traditional role.	Gender conditioning.
25. Well, basically I avoided the issue [i.e., pressure from parents to stay at home]. . . . I just avoided it and just kept doing what I had to do. And it worked.	Avoided negative pressure from parents to stay at home; determination and resolve to continue working.	Importance of work for her individuation.
26. I've often thought of it now, even thinking: well, I'll go [to work] part time and come and get my master's [degree]. But now contracts are really touchy and school boards, in my particular case, work to the letter of the law. And there is no give and if in a contract for teaching, if you go part time, you lose all status.	Lack of security in work situation discourages her desire to decrease her work hours.	Desire to decrease hours worked.
27. We're cutting back on the cattle and the farm. We're making a decided effort to spend more time for ourselves rather than chasing all the different things we've done and to start putting things in priorities. And we had to do that just because it was going - we were like on a treadmill. You couldn't get off. Like a hamster in a cage running a little wheel. . . . So it was stressful.	Decreasing involvement in farming and other activities; decision to spend more time with family; awareness of need to prioritize.	Family management adjustments - decreasing commitments, prioritizing.
28. And I wonder if people [at work] may say the same about myself, that maybe I'm sloughing off. I think if I ever heard that I would feel guilty and I'd go out there to prove them wrong and get involved [in extracurriculars] again. That desire to be seen as having done well I think would be the button you could push for me and you'd get me on the treadmill again.	Concerned with coworkers' perceptions of her performance at work; negative feedback would evoke guilt; would increase involvement in work in order to be viewed as having done well.	Other-directedness; need to prove self.
29. And it's been a really bad, bad year as far as problems with my principal and my role description and changes of everything in the school.	Experiences difficulties with her principal, role description, and major changes within her workplace.	Work stress and frustration (problems at work).
30. Well, I guess I no longer try to do everything. So if the floors don't get vacuumed one Saturday, big deal. . . . It's - I'm beginning to ease up a little bit on trying to be ultraperfect. . . . We do other things that we feel are more important and that's taken some time to get used to.	No longer tries to perform all household tasks; prioritizes; experiences difficulty in changing.	Family management strategies - prioritizing, lowering standards for the home, being more flexible.
31. I spend the time with the children. And I find I can't get much done when they're up and what I find myself doing is -	Compartmentalizes roles because of her inability to do homework while her children	Time management.

especially with papers and exams to study for - is I would try to sleep when they went to bed at 8:30. I'd sleep until about midnight and I'd get up and work through the night until about 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning. And that seemed to work. And then I was not upsetting anyone else, saying: be quiet, don't bother me.	are awake.	
32. . . . that edginess [i.e., telling her children not to bother her while she did homework] would also get everybody else edgy and then everyone would be snapping and snarling.	Finds that her irritability with children causes other family members to become irritable.	Children reacting.
33. I just stop bringing the work problems home and whining about things and said: enough is enough; this is what we've done, be done with it. You know, you can't change everything and so that was good too.	Has established boundaries between work and family roles; tries to adopt a more desirable form of control.	Setting boundaries.
34. . . . we have a jacuzzi and I'll just go in and close the door and I'll bubble away for an hour and just - it's great. And I can sleep for a while. Getting my rest for me was a big factor.	Takes time to be alone and relax; tries to ensure that she obtains enough rest.	Taking care of herself.
35. Not harping on things, teaching myself to quit complaining and to stop whining to people. And just trying to look at the positive ends, like just forcing myself to leave things behind, shut doors. . . . Letting some things go that you can't maintain; not worrying about it.	Tries to adopt a more desirable form of control; has lowered her standards for the home; tries to view matters optimistically	Forced changes in housekeeping - positive reframing.
36. And I guess I've got a pretty good network too, of supporting people. . . . Although I don't have a lot of really, really close friends, I've got lots of people that are there.	Possesses a network of people who can provide support.	Outside support.
37. For a while there I even tried to hire someone to come in and vacuum and wash floors and stuff and they just didn't meet my standards. . . . I mean, you think: . . . I can do better - well, I'll do it myself.	Outside help did not meet her standards for housecleaning; assumed duties herself.	Need to control.
38. And probably the same thing with my husband and the laundry: he would do a fine job but I don't like pink underwears. I have to keep him away from it so things aren't destroyed.	Feels that spouse does not meet her standards for doing laundry.	Criticism of spouse; need to control.
39. And still if someone . . . walks in the house for the first time and we don't know [them] . . . And right away you're looking around through a stranger's eyes and thinking: gee, it looks kind of shitty in here, you know. Better start tidying	Self-conscious about level of neatness in the home when strangers visit.	Other-directedness.

things up and picking up toys and newspapers and stuff, trying to put things together. So you still get pushed into it rather than saying: gee, come on in. This is how we are. Take us as we are.		
40. I know, I say I clean up for my mother in law. It's because she has a spotless house and you just know that you're found wanting if there's dust on the furniture and things look - there's always dust on my furniture. . . . But you then begin to feel pressure.	Influenced by feelings of being perceived as inadequate by mother-in-law in terms of standards for cleanliness in the home.	Other-directedness; feeling pressure.
41. You're expected as a farmwife to maintain a big garden and to put on huge meals and to have baking in the freezer constantly. . . . You're expected to be very sociable and you try to keep that up because that's your neighbors and that's the impression they have of you and stuff. So we'll jump to expectations, at least I think that I do.	Is motivated by her neighbors' expectations to uphold standards for the home.	Other-directedness; "pleaser".
42. But there are times when we are really different, you know, like my husband is quite happy doing what he's doing. And I think at times he's kind of wondering about this push, this drive that I have to keep going.	Views herself and spouse as different; views spouse as questioning her high need to achieve.	Power struggle; high achiever vs. low achiever.
43. And I'm very determined and incredibly stubborn. And you could really get me doing things by saying: you can't do it - putting this big red flag in front of me.	Views herself as very determined and stubborn; desire to prove self when challenged by others.	Individuation - need to prove self; denial.
44. The kids are really very adjustable and they're coping really well. I don't think they've been harmed. They think at times they have been hard done by but I don't think so. Not really, in essence.	Denies that children have been harmed by her working.	Rationalization of guilt and anxiety about absence.
45. And it's funny: when we have gone out for supper . . . And you sit there after about half an hour and you have really very little to say other than the kids or work or the farm. And it seems that we sort of lost part of the - ourselves. . . . You know, we're so busy, wrapped up in work, in children, that we lost the pleasures and the fun things, the lighthearted things.	Experiences times alone with spouse as lacking in conversation; experiences feelings of having lost part of self and pleasurable aspects of life due to hectic lifestyle.	Loss of quality in spousal relationship.
46. So many goals to achieve in one day. Race, race, race.	Experiences an overload of daily goals to achieve.	Overload and stress.
47. But you lose the time to stop and appreciate what's around you.	Experiences a lack of time to appreciate life.	Loss of pleasurable aspects of life.
48. My initial feeling is guilt [when my husband says that we never have time	Experiences guilt over spouse's claim that they	Guilt displacement.

	alone together]. I'm failing. . . . And then resentment: how dare he ask me to do one more thing. How dare he think he's so important. . . . There would [also] be anger and resentment . . .	never have time alone together; feels she is failing; anger and resentment over spouse's demand.	
49.	I get really resentful, angry, especially when there's so many people in the same situation that we are, where the husband is very proficient in the kitchen, can prepare incredible meals, and can maintain the household and do all these other things. . . . But yeah, anger, resentment, frustration.	Experiences resentment, anger, and frustration that spouse is not more proficient at household tasks.	Anger, frustration with spouse.
50.	At times it [i.e., spouse's lack of proficiency at household tasks] becomes a real - if we want to get in an argument I just bring it up and my husband's typical reaction will be to roll his eyes and heave a huge sigh and then: I'm off.	Spouse's lack of proficiency at household tasks can precipitate arguments; spouse's unwillingness to discuss this issue results in a breakdown in communication.	Lack of communication; power struggle; spousal passive aggression[5].
51.	. . . well, they [i.e., spouse and children] will empty the dishwasher and open the cupboards and shove things in. And so then I was playing hide and seek trying to find the collander or a particular bowl and I'd go wild then too. So I'm not sure I'm actually having any help.	Dissatisfied with the quality of her family's help with housework; views help as more of a nuisance.	Need to control (criticism of family).
52.	. . . if someone's around while I'm in this frenzy trying to find something, they really get a tongue lashing, whoever last emptied it [i.e., the dishwasher].	Expresses anger toward family members who don't meet standards.	Overload, stress, displacement of anger.
53.	I guess maybe he [i.e., spouse] is not quite as competitive as I am and he'll be quite happy to get sixes and sevens [in courses] and I'm not happy with sixes and sevens. And I think that's the nature of the beast, is that my husband is saying: why are you killing yourself?	Views spouse as less competitive; spouse questions her high need to achieve.	High achiever vs. low achiever.
54.	. . . I think a large part of it too is that we've had the farm. And just by the breakdown of work on the farm, it was just so much easier for my husband to go out after school to feed the cattle, ride the tractor, do all the outside work and I'd do the inside work.	Their farm has influenced the division of work, with her spouse performing the farmwork and her performing the housework.	Gender conditioning.
55.	. . . I guess my career is important and I take pride in my career.	Views career as important; takes pride in career.	Individuation - importance of career.
56.	It's, uh, extreme stress. High. Time.	Experiences an overload of	Psychological mani-

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[5]Passive aggression is defined as the expression of aggressiveness or hostility in an indirect or passive manner and is commonly used by individuals in a position of relatively low power (Reber, 1988).

	You go to bed at night and you're thinking: I've got all these things to do; so you can't sleep. And yet you're too tired to work. You know, it's a real overload of stress. Anger. Frustration. Quick to lose my temper. Oh, probably take things too personally that I shouldn't. . . . So you kind of lose a little bit of the perspective on how to view things.	stress; anger, frustration, short-temperedness, and oversensitivity; agitated reflection on tasks to be done disrupts sleep.	festations of extreme stress.
57.	And, uhm, yeah, [I feel like I'm] kind of on the edge. Teetering.	Awareness of approaching crisis point.	Extreme stress and overload.
58.	Like right now I'm not sure if I'm gonna cry or not. And I'm sure it's like - whoa, I'm gonna cry. It's, uhm, you think about it and you think: what am I doing? It's so close to the edge. And there's no reason for me to cry but it's where I'm at. And it's just high stress. It's, I guess if you're losing it, it's like losing control. Like I'm doing now.	Questions her behavior and expresses awareness of approaching a crisis point; feels she is losing control.	Extreme stress and overload.
59.	And there's no one who really you can turn to. You sort of end up on your own. You're isolated, so it's tough. . . . Uhm, no one was really there in your position, so they can't understand it.	Experiences a lack of emotional support and empathy; feels isolated.	Feelings of isolation, lack of support.
60.	I was having gastrointestinal problems. I was having problems with cramping. Then, uh, not sleeping. Insomnia. As well, my back and neck - tension headaches really bad. Uhm, I have a spinal column that has a slight curvature to it and all of a sudden that was becoming worse.	Experienced gastrointestinal problems, insomnia, back aches, and tension headaches.	Physical and psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
61.	I guess I always was a high achiever. I was the one that did well in school and the expectation was that I would continue - go on and continue to do well at school. My older brother did not finish high school and so a lot of the responsibilities sort of fell on me to do well. School was very important to my parents.	Perceives herself as always having been a high achiever; parental expectations that she achieve academically; felt responsible to achieve academically.	High need to achieve.
62.	They [i.e., parents] were quite critical of my older brother and maybe that made me try to achieve the more [at school] because he was letting them down. . . . So you thought: well, I'll do it; maybe I'll get the approval then. And so you sought the approval and I worked hard to get it.	Strove to achieve at school in order to avoid disappointing parents and to gain their approval.	Other-directedness; achieving in order to "please".
63.	Well, at times [I feel] guilty [over not always having been there for my children]. The guilt has to be there.	Experiences guilt over not always having been available for her children.	Guilt over absence.
64.	So I sort of justified - you can sort of	Aware of her use of rational-	Rationalization of im-

say: hey, maybe they [i.e., children] are a little unhappy now but in the long run they become more independent; they're more self-sufficient. . . . So I - you do a mental juggling to justify it [i.e., working] and it can work out quite well.	ization to justify her working.	pact of absence on children.
65. Looking back, I tried so hard to please him [i.e., father] and my mother. And you sort of go on trying to please people. . . . I was constantly trying to please. And I think we still try to do that. . . . And so that, yeah, you do what people think you should do. I look back on being a child and the expectations.	Strove to please parents and presently strives to please others; does what others expect her to do; high expectations of her as a child.	Other-directedness; "pleaser".

Table 2
Thematic Clusters of Elizabeth's Experience

1. Personality patterns influenced by experiences in family of origin
   (1, 7, 15, 18, 19, 25, 28, 37, 39, 40, 41, 43, 51, 55, 61, 62, 65)

2. Work-parental role conflict and child-related guilt
   (2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 12, 63)

3. Stress, overload, frustration
   (6, 8, 9, 29, 46, 52, 57, 58)

4. Management of role conflicts
   (11, 20, 27, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36)

5. Child/ren reacting to her working
   (13, 14, 32)

6. Spouse reacting to her working
   (16)

7. Marital difficulties
   (17, 21, 23, 38, 42, 49, 50, 53)

8. Rationalization of impact of working
   (22, 44, 64)

9. Gender role conditioning
   (24, 54)

10. Desire to decrease level of work involvement
    (26)

11. Loss of quality of life
    (45, 47)

12. Work-spousal role conflict
    (48)

13. Manifestations of extreme stress
    (56, 60)

14. Feelings of isolation
    (59)

Overall Synthesis of Elizabeth's Experience

As a result of the role conflict in her life, Elizabeth experiences high levels of stress and overload. She finds that having two young children in kindergarten places large demands on her time. She views her employer as unsupportive in such child-related matters, thus serving to compound her difficulties. She is also frustrated by the steadily increasing demands of her job, recent difficulties she has had with her principal, and major changes within her workplace. As a result of the stress and overload she experiences, she sometimes feels that she is "teetering" on the edge of a crisis. Moreover, she sometimes questions her behavior and experiences feelings of "losing control". At such times she experiences feelings of isolation and a lack of emotional support and empathy from other family members. Her frustration and anger with her role overload can also be displaced onto other family members.

Elizabeth's need to deal with the conflicting demands of her parental and work roles results in unresolvable conflict between both and feelings of guilt and anxiety about her children. She experiences self-doubts, guilt, and anxiety about her children and the quality of care that they are receiving while she is at work. She also experiences guilt and anxiety over the possible negative impact that her working may have on her children.

The high level of stress that Elizabeth experiences also takes its toll both physically and psychologically. She experiences gastrointestinal cramps, backaches, and tension headaches. She also finds that she is short-tempered, overly sensitive, and sometimes unable to sleep.

Elizabeth also experiences a loss of quality in her life. She feels that because of her present situation she lacks the time to appreciate life and has

"lost part of" herself. Time alone with her spouse is also seen as somewhat empty and lacking in conversation.

An additional consequence of the role conflicts that Elizabeth experiences involves the reactions of other family members. She experiences initial guilt and subsequent anger and resentment when her spouse complains of her lack of time for or interest in their relationship. Similarly, she feels that her children resent having to compete with her job for her time. As a result of the role conflict that she experiences, she also wishes to decrease her level of work involvement.

Elizabeth's role conflicts are compounded by her need to control, other-directedness, high need to achieve, and need to individuate, which appear to have been influenced by her experiences within her family of origin. Her need to control is evident in the area of domestic standards, where she finds that she is sometimes dissatisfied with the quality of other family members' contributions to housework and questions the value of their assistance. In terms of her other-directedness, she feels that within her family of origin, her parents' expectations of her were high and she strove to please them and gain their approval. She presently strives to achieve this with others and feels that her behavior is often motivated by others' expectations. She also expresses concern about coworkers' perceptions of her abilities and level of involvement at work. She describes herself as competitive and feels that she has always been a high achiever. In terms of her need to individuate, her career is important to her. She also views her work as very important for her independence and expresses an unwillingness to be dependent on her spouse, suggesting a fear of

dependency. She also possesses a strong need to prove herself when her abilities are challenged by others.

Difficulties within her marriage also contribute to her role conflicts. She experiences anger, resentment, and frustration that her spouse is not more proficient in doing housework. She is critical of her spouse in that she views him as generally lacking ability to perform household tasks and his assistance as temporary and prompted by her appeals for assistance. She finds that his lack of proficiency in performing household tasks can precipitate arguments and an unwillingness on his part to discuss the issue, suggesting a lack of communication, a power struggle, and passive aggression on his part. Additionally, Elizabeth views her spouse as possessing a lower need to achieve academically and in his career than she does, suggesting the existence of a high achiever/low achiever dynamic within their relationship. Moreover, she feels that at times her spouse questions her high need to achieve, suggesting both his disapproval of her behavior and the existence of a power struggle.

Her gender role conditioning is an additional factor contributing to her role conflicts. She is aware of having allowed her spouse to remain in a traditional role during their marriage and of having accepted the traditional division of work associated with their farming activities (i.e., her performing the housework and her spouse performing the farmwork).

Elizabeth attempts to deal with her role conflicts in a number of ways. She is aware of rationalizing the impact that her absence has had on her children. Moreover, she rationalizes the guilt that she experiences as a result of working and also views her children as having become more independent and

more mature than their peers as a result of her working. She also uses a number of other strategies to manage her role conflicts. These include decreasing her involvement in extra work-related activities; decreasing commitments to farm-related and other activities; having a supportive spouse; lowering her standards for the home; being more flexible in her situation; spending more time with her family; prioritizing activities; using time management skills in dealing with problems at home; establishing boundaries between work and home; positive reframing of situations; obtaining enough rest and time alone; and obtaining support from a network of people.

Vicki

Personal Information

Vicki is thirty one years of age and is employed full-time as an administrative assistant with a manufacturing firm. She has been employed in the labor force for fourteen years, five of which have been full-time. She has been in the manufacturing industry for over ten years and has worked in her present position for one and one half years. She has been married for fourteen years and has three children. In terms of her family of origin, she is the second youngest of five children, with two older sisters and an older brother. Her father is an alcoholic and she remembers him often being away from home and being uninvolved in her life. Consequently, she feels that her father "never really gave".

The excerpts taken from the transcribed interviews with Vicki and the analysis of each excerpt, are presented in Table 3. Table 4 presents a clustering of the second level abstractions into more abstract themes. The numbers shown in brackets below each theme indicate the specific excerpts

from Table 3 which compose the thematic cluster. Table 4 is then followed by the overall synthesis of Vicki's experience.

Table 3
Thematic Abstraction of Vicki's Experience

	Excerpts From Protocols	Paraphrases	Themes
1.	But still, it's always enough that you don't spend enough time with the kids. There's still always that.	Her lack of time for her children is an ever-present concern.	Child-related guilt.
2.	So it's just like, you know, you put so many people [i.e., extended family members] out for a simple thing for when the children are on their way out the door saying: do you have your lunch? You know, then the guilt thinking: oh, you put all those people out.	Experiences guilt over feeling that she has inconvenienced extended family members who have assisted with her parental role.	Guilt.
3.	. . . if you didn't have these people [outside the family] to help you, you couldn't work. There's no way.	Views support from others outside of the family as crucial to her ability to work.	Outside assistance.
4.	And my sister . . . talked with me one day and said: you know what she [i.e., daughter] told me is that she just missed you and that's why she said she was getting tummy aches and couldn't breathe.	Discovered that her daughter fabricated symptoms because she missed her.	Children reacting to her absence.
5.	And what I started doing with her [i.e., daughter] was getting up a half an hour earlier and spending time with her reading books, watching t.v., making breakfast together. . . . and I find that when the mornings are really rushed and we don't have that time to spend together, that there's usually a problem. Sometimes she yells at me when I come home from work late. You know, she actually: you don't spend enough time with me . . .	Spends extra time with daughter; finds that daughter becomes angry with her when they do not have this extra time together.	New family management strategies - spending extra time with daughter.
6.	You always think: well, you know, next year all the bills will be paid off and maybe I can work at part time. But it always seems that the money gets absorbed and you still have to keep on working.	Feels unable to decrease her level of work involvement because of the family's expenses.	Perceived financial necessity of working.
7.	Something else I've done since I started the new job in January was I brought each of them [i.e., children] to my work on a Saturday when they're basically closed there. And I brought each of them to my work alone. So they could see what I do and when I say I have to work late or something, that they know why or they can see exactly what I do.	Takes children to her workplace individually so that they understand her work situation.	Decreasing children's demands.
8.	I also started about a year ago, once a month taking each of the children one at a time on a date. And it's their choice. They	Spends time alone with each of her children.	Placating children.

get a money limit, what we'll spend.		
9. . . . these are the years. Once they're gone, they're gone. And you're wondering if you're really missing something [with your children] by not being there [i.e., at home] all the time.	Self-doubts regarding whether she is missing an important aspect of her children's development by working.	Anxiety/guilt about children.
10. Or when it was really cold out this winter, that was really hard. Worrying about - phoning neighbors and things and who could pick them [i.e., children] up.	Experiences worry about her children during cold weather and arranging to have them picked up.	Anxiety about children.
11. . . . I've worked a lot of late nights and my husband who has been doing the homework with the kids and he's not as - I'm pretty soft, you know. But he's like: you can't do that until your homework is done. And they call me at work: dad says I can't go out.	Her children phone her at work because of their dissatisfaction with spouse's parenting style.	Children reacting to her absence.
12. So the kids found that hard getting used to dad's cooking . . . And I'd know how to fix their things [i.e., meals] and well [with my husband it's:] you just eat it, that's what's before you and that caused a lot of problems.	Children have had difficulty adjusting to spouse's cooking; has caused problems.	Children reacting to her absence.
13. We've tried to deal with that [i.e., problems associated with spouse's preparation of meals] as - I'm trying to come [home] earlier and I told him: just feed the kids a snack when you get home and we'll prepare dinner together as husband and wife. We might eat a half hour, 45 minutes later but there's not going to be this stress.	Tries to foster cooperation as a couple in order to find solutions to problems.	Family management adjustments - finding creative solutions.
14. Lunches, that's another thing. Having their lunches - making their lunches the night before, you know, gets to be a real chore. Each one wants something else in theirs. . . . And it's always something, it's always like a three-ring circus.	Perceives children's demands as burdensome and creating a chaotic situation.	Overload and frustration in satisfying children's demands.
15. [When the demands placed on me are too great] I go and have a bath and I cry. You do. You just feel like everyone is trying to pull you in every direction.	Sometimes feels overwhelmed by others' demands and has a bath and cries.	Overload and frustration.
16. And you just really felt pulled because you don't think you've changed any. But to outsiders, like to your sisters and your husband and that, maybe you have because you're not there and attentive at their every little whim or there when they want to talk and be there for them all the time. And that really hurt.	Experiences feelings of hurt and frustration that others view her as having changed because she has less time for them.	Frustration with demands of spouse and siblings.
17. Sometimes what you want to do isn't what gets done. I had to let the house go. Like I say, I couldn't do everything anymore.	Lowered her standards for the home.	Forced changes in housekeeping.

	And there's dust on the furniture; there's dishes stacked in the sink most times.		
18.	And then this September my son was old enough and took the babysitting course and he was left in charge. But I notice that it has caused a lot of tension between the kids, him being in charge and abusing his privileges.	Having her oldest child baby-sit his siblings has resulted in tension between the children.	Sibling conflict.
19.	. . . quite often I think: what if I had spent more time at home? And I don't know, I really don't know if it would be any different, if my kids would turn out to be different adults. . . . Again, guilt because you [will] never know.	Self-questioning and guilt over impact that her working has had on her children.	Guilt over absence and impact on children.
20.	A lot of times when they [i.e., children] are reading stories to you, it's trying to be attentive to them when you're just too tired to be. Or when they say to you: mom are you listening to me? You know, yeah, yeah. And then you feel guilt again because you're not maybe being as attentive to them as you should be.	Experiences guilt when she is too exhausted to be attentive to her children.	Guilt over children's needs.
21.	And then the next time I went away, . . . I stayed in a hotel. Well, my husband, I never thought him to be a jealous man but he just couldn't believe that I would go to the hotel at night and read a book. You know, it caused a lot of jealousy, a lot of stress.	The travelling associated with her work resulted in spouse's jealousy and stress between them.	Work-related absence producing marital conflict and jealousy.
22.	Or after I had flown away from home about 10 times, when the kids would just kind of in the morning: goodbye mom, see you, bring home a treat. And it wasn't: don't go mommy. And then that was like maybe they don't need me anymore. That really, really hurt. . . . [I felt t]hat they were growing away from me, that they were growing up too fast.	When her children grew accustomed to her travelling away from home, she experienced hurt, feelings of no longer being needed, and feelings that her children were growing up too quickly.	Fear of distancing from children (fear of loss).
23.	I've also tried to get them [i.e., children] involved more in things like grocery shopping, to make suppers more easy. Have them pick one meal and things throughout the week.	Includes children in decision-making in order to decrease stress.	New family management strategies - inclusion of children.
24.	People would often say to me: well geez, don't you hate the drive home from work? And I said: no because that is the only time that I'm ever truly alone by myself. And I can listen to what music I want and by the time I get home, I'm unwound. And I enjoy that.	Enjoys having quiet time between work and home.	Lack of time for self.
25.	You know, all this guilt about when - all these things that can go wrong when you're not there [i.e., at home]. . . . It's	Experiences guilt over the potential problems which can occur at home when she is	Guilt about absence and potential problems.

just that when you're not there to deal with them personally, it's really hard.	not there; finds it very difficult not being at home to deal personally with problems.	
26. [Children sat on steps for 45 minutes in the winter because her son had locked himself out of the house.] And I thought: I'm never going out of town again. And then after a couple of weeks, you start: well, it was okay, nothing really bad happened and it could've happened anytime to anybody.	Rationalization of disturbing incident involving her children, which occurred while she was working out of town.	Rationalization of guilt about absence.
27. . . . I've seen my son have to become a lot more responsible and maybe grow up a little bit faster than if I was there [i.e., at home].	Views son as more responsible and mature because of her absence from home.	Positive rationalization of absence.
28. My husband and I really don't do anything alone together. It's gotta be - I think we went out on my birthday. We went out to a movie and that was 6 months ago now. And that was the last time that we went out alone.	Feels she has very little time alone with spouse.	Loss of quality in spousal relationship.
29. . . . because when you're home, the top priority then is the kids and not your husband. And that I know has caused problems.	Making the children her highest priority has resulted in conflict with spouse.	Children vs. spouse - marital conflict.
30. We [i.e., her and her spouse] have had fights over me working and things.	Has experienced conflict with spouse over her working.	Marital conflict over working.
31. For 2 weeks I was home and I was Miss mom again. I just - it was great. I was cooking again. . . . The kids were happy . . . And then I got a job opportunity of a lifetime and talked with him [i.e., spouse] about it and he said: well, go for it. And I did . . . It was further away and he didn't like it at all, me going to work the second time. At all. And the kids didn't either.	Desired to continue with new job despite negative feedback from other family members.	Her ambition vs. family disapproval.
32. . . . if I have to go out in an evening or to go shopping or go visit somebody or anything, I always try and bring at least one or two of the kids with me.	Tries to decrease spouse's childcare responsibilities when possible.	Decreasing burden on spouse.
33. . . . he [i.e., spouse] says on the weekend, he always has planned what he wants to do. And it never seems that he has time for for what he wants to do. But he says I always find time for what I want to do. . . . But it's not that way. I think I am considerate of him and the kids.	Spouse feels he lacks time for himself on weekends but that she has time for herself; she views this as inaccurate.	Spouse's resentment over assisting.
34. And this spring he [i.e., spouse] let them [i.e., daughters] go to the store by them-	Experienced anger and frustration that she was at work	Need to control despite absence.

	selves and that caused some problems with me trying to say to the girls, like: you can't go to the store. Well, daddy says we can. And not being there to actually put my foot down or to go with them so they wouldn't have to go by themselves. . . . [I was] angry and frustrated. Really frustrated because there was nothing I could do about it. And angry that he didn't think it was a big enough deal.	and powerless to prevent her spouse from allowing the children to go to the store unattended; experienced anger that spouse did not feel the situation warranted concern.	
35.	Like it seems every day there's a new problem that you have to contend with and deal with because you're away from home so much.	Feels she is constantly contending with new problems because of her absence from home.	Overload and stress.
36.	And there's just too many other things to try and deal with the little things that escape and get by you. . . . I also have school books where you're supposed to put in their school picture and who their teacher was. And I haven't done that in two years. And then you get guilt because you haven't done it. . . . The little things get forgotten.	Finds that small tasks are forgotten due to the overwhelming number of tasks to be dealt with; experiences guilt when these are forgotten.	Overload and feelings of inadequacy in parenting.
37.	I think [having financial independence] - it feels like I've grown up. It does. I never had my own money to spend really.	Awareness of self-growth as a result of earning her own income.	Financial reinforcement of working.
38.	. . . I said: I'm the one that seems to choose where we're gonna go and when we're gonna take the holidays. And it wasn't like that before. But now it's just like, if I don't make any decisions, the decisions won't happen.	Feels that she must now make decisions for the family because spouse will not take part in decision-making.	Spousal passive aggression; high achiever vs. low achiever.
39.	Basically, he [i.e., spouse] just looks tired all the time. I know he doesn't enjoy his job. And I enjoy mine. And I find it really hard to try and deal with - he's been at the same job for 13 years . . . And he comes home and he's stressed out. I come home and I'm tired but I'm happy. I have no qualms about my job and the things I've done.	Finds it difficult dealing with spouse's dissatisfaction with his work; enjoys her work.	High achiever vs. low achiever; meaningfulness of her work.
40.	He [i.e., spouse] also gets very angry when I get home and the phone just starts ringing non-stop and it's for me. And he really gets angry when it's work calling me at home.	Spouse becomes angry when she receives work-related phone calls at home.	Work-to-family spillover resulting in spousal conflict.
41.	I chose the fabric [for the bedroom] and he [i.e., spouse] didn't really like it because it was floral. And I said: we've always - in all the years we've been married, we've always had what you wanted to have. This time I want to have what I want to have. So that was 2 years ago and he still calls the bedroom my bed-	Her self-empowerment resulted in resentment from spouse; feels that spouse has had difficulty relinquishing control.	Power struggle; spousal resistance to change.

	room. . . . I think maybe [there is resentment] . . . I don't think it's been easy on him trying to give up all the control.		
42.	And I think he [i.e., spouse] misses me as much as the kids do, . . . I'm sure. And yet instead of saying: I miss you, let's spend some time together, he gets depressed. He gets moody. . . . I don't think he really knows what he's feeling. I don't think we've ever sat down and talked about it.	Feels that spouse becomes moody and depressed instead of verbalizing his needs; views him as not being in touch with his feelings; feels that there is a lack of communication on this subject.	Spousal resentment of situation.
43.	Well, probably [an inability to communicate] on both [our] parts because when you're tired and have so many things to do, you don't want to open up a can of worms.	Feels that their lack of communication results from a desire to avoid confrontations when exhausted and overburdened with tasks.	Avoidance of relationship issues.
44.	So I want to do something really nice for him [i.e., spouse]. Plan a weekend where he doesn't know about and have the kids farmed out. And the 2 of us go away for 3 days together.	Aware of the need to invest more time in marital relationship.	Placating spouse.
45.	And that causes a lot of stress, just a simple thing like grocery shopping because even though I'm happy that I didn't have to go because I was tired, I still snap out at him because he bought the wrong brand of dish soap or dishwasher detergent. . . . And he doesn't make a list and do things and sometimes I snap out at him and then - yet, then I feel guilty because he's gone and done something for me, you know.	Becomes angry with spouse when he does not do grocery shopping as she would like; experiences guilt because spouse has done shopping for her.	Need to control.
46.	It would be - I know, over a year ago, where I would just work late even though I didn't have to because I knew when I got home it was gonna be: nyah, nyah, you work late and you're never home, whatever. So I did the exact opposite of what I should do. And I would. I'd work late so when I got home I didn't have to deal with it. . . . I did that for about a month and I really got run down and cried a lot and everything.	Worked late hours as a means of avoiding spouse's complaints that she worked late and was never home.	Work as relationship avoidance.
47.	But it's really hard for me because when I do something I have to do it all the way or not at all. So that's really hard for me to give some of my - they hired me an assistant and it's been really hard for me to give up some of my roles in my job to somebody else.	Experiences difficulty delegating to subordinates at work.	Need to control.
48.	Well, then, first it's anger, like: how could daddy have let her [i.e., daughter] make her own toast [and burn her finger]. And then you're angry at yourself because you weren't there for her to say: mommy,	Initially experiences anger toward spouse and then toward self because she was not at home to prevent child's mishap; unsure of what to focus	Guilt, control, and displaced anger.

	make me some toast. . . . So you're angry but I really don't think you know what to focus your anger on. And it's just anger inside and you can feel your heart beating fast. And a lot of tears.	her anger upon and feels internal anger.	
49.	I cry a lot more than I used to [because of stress]. . . . I think stress and anxiety. Some nights you just stay awake at night because you can't stop thinking of all the things that you have to do - that might be a week down the road but you're worrying about.	Feels she cries more now because of stress and anxiety; worried reflection over tasks to be done disrupts sleep.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
50.	And you always have this anxiety about: you're gonna forget something really important. And once in a while you do.	Experiences continual anxiety over possibility of forgetting an important commitment.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
51.	I missed my nephew's birthday. . . . I forgot and I just felt so guilty. And then I got myself into another problem by making a promise I might not be able to keep by saying I'm gonna take him out and do this and that. So it's one more thing on your list of things that you have to do for somebody else and not yourself or not your family.	Difficulties are created by making promises that she may not be able to fulfill.	Other-directedness; "pleaser".
52.	But probably most of all, sometimes you're just too tired to do the commitments that you've made for yourself. And yet, sometimes you just don't stop making them and you just feel you're pressed to the limit.	Feels she is sometimes too exhausted to fulfill commitments made; sometimes unable to stop making commitments and experiences overload.	Other-directedness; inability to say no.
53.	And I said: well, what cereal do you want? And they [i.e., children] all started fighting about what cereal they wanted. And I started bawling in the middle of Safeway. And that's when I went home to drop the kids off, phoned and my doctor was in and I went straight in and told him that either I was losing my mind or there was something the matter with me. Because I felt like I just was gonna break and fall into pieces. . . . But it was just like, I had been pushed to the ultimate limit.	Feared for her psychological well-being; felt she had been pushed to the limits of her ability to cope.	Extreme stress and overload.
54.	I find now that I look more to dealing with a solution to a problem instead of just getting down about it and going into my bedroom and shutting the door because I don't want to deal with it.	Attempts to find solutions to problems instead of avoiding them.	Looking for solutions instead of reacting.
55.	I think there's the same amount of stress [in my life now as before]. I've just learned to deal with it differently because there's always gonna be problems.	Has learned to be more flexible in dealing with new problems that arise.	Family management adjustments - flexibility in situation.
56.	. . . I think it [i.e., work] does [increase my blood pressure] because of the amount -	Experiences high blood pressure as a result of the	Physical manifestations of extreme

	it's kind of stabilized now. It wasn't as high as it was back in September but he [i.e., doctor] hasn't talked about cutting the dosage anymore.	stress associated with her work.	stress.
57.	I never really got along with my dad. Well, I suppose I wanted to but you never could please him. . . . I used to play the flute. Did he ever come to a recital? No. Did he ever come to a parent interview? No. Did he ever come see a play in drama in high school? No. Never. He never was there, ever. . . . I don't feel close at all to my dad.	Does not feel close to her father; wished to be closer to him but felt that she could never please him; viewed him as uninvolved in her life and unsupportive.	Desire to "please" father; need for approval.
58.	And when we'd bring home report cards, I mean, I always got H's and H's were really good. And just about my whole report card would be H's. . . . And it's funny, to this day that that should come up and that I remember it. That really hurt. Like, it was like you wanted him [i.e., her father] to say: well, you had a good report card too. . . . But he never once said that was good. Never once. . . . Yeah, I wanted a pat on the back.	Desired her father's recognition and approval but did not receive it.	Need for father's approval.
59.	He [i.e., spouse] does more [i.e., housework and child care] than me. . . . And he does it less begrudgingly than he used to. And he does more without me having to ask.	Spouse performs a larger share of domestic tasks.	Spousal resentment over performing domestic tasks.
60.	I felt he [i.e., spouse] had invaded my territory [when he was home during the day and I wasn't]. . . . But it felt like, yeah, the roles had been reversed and that I'd missed out on something. And I felt jealous. . . . no, I didn't like that.	Felt that spouse had invaded her domain by being home during the day while she was at work; experienced jealousy and dislike of the situation.	Need to control; ambivalence.
61.	. . . sometimes you feel like if you want something done right you have to do it yourself. Or you've been doing it [i.e., housework] for so many years that you like things done a certain way. And also you've lost a bit of control. And he's doing it and it's not the way you would have done it. It's not.	Prefers tasks to be done in a particular way; feels that she has lost some control because spouse is performing housework.	Need to control.
62.	. . . when I come home from work and their school papers are strewn all about the living room, their coats aren't hung up, and their boots are in the kitchen. . . . You know, I get angry. . . . [Also g]uilt because you're not there and if you were there they wouldn't have happened. . . . [Also] frustration. Yeah, a lot of frustration because some things - you're not there. You don't have the time and you can't change it.	Experiences anger and guilt when her children create untidy conditions at home; also experiences frustration because she is not at home and cannot change the situation.	Guilt about absence and anger at family.
63.	. . . I tried all sorts of things, like making	Has children take responsi-	Family management

	one in charge of the boots, one in charge of the coats, and one in charge of the school bags. That only lasted a week. So basically, it's that they [i.e., children] each have to keep care of their own things.	bility for caring for their own belongings.	adjustments - children's responsibility-taking.
64.	They [i.e., children] definitely get away with more when I'm not there. . . . Sometimes you're tired and will overlook things too because you don't want to have confrontations. So you overlook things that you know you should have said something about.	Awareness that when exhausted, she overlooks some situations with the children in order to avoid confrontations.	Fatigue and avoiding confrontations.
65.	At the seminar I went to last night my boss said: Vicki has the most stressful job out of anybody. . . . So it's a big responsibility. It's fun though. You kind of thrive on that. . . . I have two people under me: one in purchasing, one in production. And they both have to answer to me.	Views her work as involving a high level of responsibility; "thrives" on her work.	Work as a source of approval, power, and control.
66.	High, I think they [i.e., supervisors] have high expectations of me. I think that they expect me - because I started at the beginning staying long hours. Now it's just about expected of me.	Perceives expectations made of her in her work role to be high.	Pressures at work.
67.	Well, if you've had a rough morning trying to get them off to school and you've had to yell at one of them or all of them to get them out the door and then you feel - it kind of puts a whole downer on your day and you find it very hard trying to concentrate on your work.	Finds that when she has had a conflict with her children, it has a negative impact on her day at work and makes it very difficult for her to concentrate on her work.	Family-to-work spillover.
68.	And there's never been a problem at work if my child is sick and I have to go home. There's never conflict. You still feel guilty leaving and doing that.	Views her employer as supportive when she needs to leave work for a sick child; experiences guilt in doing so.	Self-imposed guilt.
69.	Well, of course sometimes when it's very, very busy [at work], even when you're at home you're still thinking about work sometimes. It's hard to put it away. . . . And being really aware of their [i.e., children's] problems.	Finds that when it is very busy at work, she is still preoccupied with work when at home; finds it difficult to stop thinking about work and be aware of children's problems.	Work-to-family spillover.
70.	You think: well, I'll bring it [i.e., work] home and then that way I don't have to go in or I don't have to work late. . . . You know, then they [i.e., children] are jumping all over you and: don't, mommy's working. And then there's the guilt. And your work is interfering with your family life.	Experiences guilt when she must tell her children not to disrupt her while she performs work-related activities at home.	Work-to-family spillover.
71.	It's hard on all of them [i.e., children] and it - during the busy season, yes, it [i.e., working late hours] happens just about	Finds that when she must regularly work late hours that it is difficult and upset-	Extended absence upsetting to children.

	constantly. You know, 6-day weeks and you're working at least 10, 12 hours a day. And it's very hard on them. They're old enough now to say: I miss you and why do you work so hard? . . . Do they make you do it? . . . And it does upset them.	ting for her children.	
72.	And then you always think: well, I'm not going to do it [i.e., work late] anymore but then something always comes up and then there's the pressure.	Desire to avoid working late is thwarted by demands and pressures at work.	Other-directedness; inability to say no.
73.	I've stopped making promises that I can't keep. I've been really, really careful and if I do make a promise to the children, that I keep it. I make sure.	Has limited her commitments to others; is careful to keep any promises she makes to her children.	Setting limits/boundaries; prioritizing.
74.	Organization. You know, being as organized as you can.	Tries to be as organized as possible.	Importance of organization.
75.	So I've had a babysitter come in for 4 hours a day [this summer] and she's got all sorts of activities planned. . .	Has hired a babysitter for the summer to keep her children occupied.	Outside help.
76.	And he always seems to be there emotionally for me. He seems to know when I want to talk about it and when I don't want to talk about it.	Views her spouse as being emotionally supportive.	Emotionally supportive spouse.
77.	He [i.e., spouse] does it - 90% of the time he gets the groceries. And it's really funny when we go together: well no, don't buy that, buy this. And we're just about - we're having a fight in the middle of the grocery store.	Finds that conflict arises as a result of grocery shopping with her spouse.	Power struggle.
78.	. . . I've noticed especially over the last year that she [i.e., youngest daughter] has become very, very competent. . . . I notice with other children her age, she's very much, just about more mature than they are and I think that's because I haven't been there a lot of the time. And she's had to deal with things on her own and she can't always come running to mommy.	Feels that because of her absence from home, her youngest daughter has become very competent and more mature than her peers.	Positive rationalization.
79.	I don't know if that [i.e., son's angry comments] would happen if I wasn't working too but I think it's because I'm not there. And he's looking for ways, kind of getting back at me.	Feels that son's angry comments are a means of retaliating against her because she is not at home.	Child acting out.
80.	When he [i.e., spouse] was gone for a few days last week it was really hard because I had to be a single parent and then I really realized how much he did do, you know. . . . I really realized all the little things that he did do for me.	Through spouse's absence, realizes extent of his supportiveness.	Supportive spouse.
81.	I found that life has become a lot more simpler since I stopped working the	Has decreased the amount of extra time she	Decreased involvement in extra work

	really late hours and the six, seven day weeks.	spends at work.	activities.
82.	I'd like to be able to work from 9:00 to 3:00, the same hours that the kids are gone. . . . And life would be a lot simpler.	Desire to decrease work hours to coincide with hours that children are at school.	Desire to decrease hours worked.

Table 4
Thematic Clusters of Vicki's Experience

1. Work-parental role conflict and child-related guilt
   (1, 2, 9, 10, 19, 20, 22, 25, 48, 62)

2. Management of role conflicts
   (3, 5, 7, 13, 17, 23, 32, 54, 55, 63, 73, 74, 75, 76, 80, 81)

3. Child/ren reacting to her working
   (4, 11, 12, 18, 71, 79)

4. Rationalization of impact of working
   (6, 26, 27, 78)

5. Personality patterns influenced by experiences in family of origin
   (8, 31, 34, 37, 44, 45, 47, 51, 52, 57, 58, 60, 61, 65, 68, 72)

6. Stress, overload, frustration
   (14, 15, 35, 36, 53, 66)

7. Work-spousal role conflict
   (16)

8. Spouse reacting to her working
   (21, 30)

9. Loss of quality of life
   (24, 28)

10. Marital difficulties
    (29, 33, 38, 39, 41, 42, 59, 77)

11. Spillover
    (40, 67, 69, 70)

12. Avoidance of confrontations and conflict
    (43, 46, 64)

13. Manifestations of extreme stress
    (49, 50, 56)

14. Desire to decrease level of work involvement
    (82)

Overall Synthesis of Vicki's Experience

Vicki experiences high levels of stress and overload as a result of the role conflict present in her life. She sometimes feels overwhelmed by other's demands and sometimes views her children's demands as burdensome and creating a chaotic situation. She also feels that she is constantly having to contend with new problems at home because of her absence. Due to the overwhelming number of tasks that she must deal with, small tasks (e.g., maintaining the childrens' school photo albums) are forgotten and guilt is experienced as a result. As a result of the overload she experiences, she sometimes feels that she is pushed to the limits of her ability to cope.

There are also consequences associated with the conflict which exists between her parental and work roles. She finds that she often questions herself about the impact that her working has had on her children, resulting in feelings of guilt. She also experiences self-doubts regarding whether she is missing an important aspect of her children's development by working. Her lack of time for her children is also an ever-present concern and she experiences guilt over the potential problems which can occur at home in her absence. She finds it very difficult not being at home to deal personally with problems that arise. Moreover, she experiences guilt about her absence and frustration and anger at her family when problems (e.g., children having mishaps or creating untidy conditions in the home) occur in her absence. Vicki also experienced fears of loss and distancing from her children as a result of work-related travelling away from home. Additionally, she experiences hurt and frustration that others (e.g., her husband and her sisters) view her as having changed because she now has less time to spend with them.

Vicki finds that she presently cries more as a result of the high level of stress and anxiety in her life. She also experiences insomnia as a result of worrying about the large number of tasks to be done and continual anxiety over the possibility of forgetting an important commitment. She also has high blood pressure and feels that this is due to the high level of stress associated with her work. There is also a loss of quality in her life and she finds that she has little time alone and that she and her spouse rarely have time alone together.

Other consequences of role conflict for Vicki involve the reactions of other family members. She has experienced conflict with her spouse over the issue of her working and finds that he becomes moody and depressed because of her absence from home. She has also experienced conflict and spousal jealousy as a result of the travelling associated with her work. In terms of her children, she finds that they question her and become upset when she must regularly work late hours. She also feels that the angry comments that her son directs toward her are a means of retaliating because she is not at home. Additionally, she finds that problems have arisen (e.g., her children phoning her at work to complain about her spouse's parenting style and their difficulty adjusting to his meals) as a result of her spouse's assumption of additional parenting responsibilities in her absence.

Vicki also experiences different forms of spillover. In terms of work-to-family spillover, she finds that when it is very busy at work, she can be mentally preoccupied with work when at home and can find it difficult to be aware of her children's problems. Additionally, conflict can arise with other family members as a result of her bringing work home or receiving work-related phone calls at home. In terms of family-to-work spillover, she finds that if she has had a conflict

with her children, it can negatively impact her day at work and make it difficult for her to concentrate on her work. A final consequence of role conflict for Vicki involves her desire to decrease her level of work involvement.

Vicki's role conflicts are compounded by her need to control, her other-directedness and high need to achieve, which appear to have been influenced by her experiences within her family of origin. In terms of her need to control, she feels angry and frustrated that she is at work and powerless to influence her spouse's parenting style. She also finds that she becomes angry with her spouse when he fails to purchase the household products that she prefers and when he does not perform the grocery shopping in the manner that she would like (e.g., fails to make a grocery list or fails to use coupons). In terms of housework, she expresses a desire to have tasks done in a particular manner and feels that she has lost some control because her spouse is performing a portion of the housework. Her need to control is also evident at work, where she experiences difficulty delegating to her subordinates.

She also feels that within her family of origin she could never please her father and never received his approval. Her other-directedness is evident in that she is sometimes unable to limit her commitments to others and subsequently experiences feelings of overload. Other-directedness is also evident within the work domain, where she is unable to refuse extra demands despite the desire to avoid working late. Attempts to placate her children (e.g., spending time alone with each of her children) and her spouse (e.g., planning a weekend alone with her spouse) are also evident. Her work provides her with a significant source of approval, reinforcement, and control, and her high need to

achieve is evident in that she desired to continue with her new job despite negative feedback from other family members.

Marital difficulties have also contributed to Vicki's role conflicts. A power struggle is apparent and she feels that her spouse has had difficulty relinquishing control and has been resistant to and resentful of changes that have occurred as a result of her new financial independence. She also finds that she must now make decisions for the family because her spouse is unwilling to assist in making them, suggesting passive-aggressive behavior on his part. She finds that he complains of never having time for himself but feels that she has time for her own plans, suggesting spousal resentment over assisting with domestic tasks. She also feels that he becomes moody and depressed instead of verbalizing his need to spend more time with her, suggesting a lack of communication and spousal resentment of the present situation. Moreover, she enjoys her work but finds it difficult to deal with the fact that her spouse does not enjoy his work, suggesting a high achiever/low achiever dynamic in their marriage.

In attempting to deal with her role conflicts, Vicki uses both rationalization and avoidance. She rationalizes her guilt about being absent from home and views her children as having become more responsible and mature as a result of her absence from home. Additionally, she is aware that when she is exhausted and overburdened that she will overlook some situations involving the children and avoid issues within her marriage in order to avoid confrontations.

Vicki also uses a number of other strategies to manage her role conflicts. These include receiving assistance in her parental role from extended family

members; decreasing her children's demands (e.g., taking each of them to her workplace individually so that they understand her work situation; having them take responsibility for caring for their own belongings; and including them in decision-making in order to decrease stress), spending extra time with her children; decreasing her involvement in extra work activities; fostering cooperation as a couple in order to solve problems; lowering her standards for the home; prioritizing activities; attempting to find solutions to problems instead of avoiding them; being more flexible in dealing with new problems that arise; limiting her commitments to others; being as organized as possible; hiring outside help to assist with her parenting role; and having a supportive spouse.

Gail

Personal Information

Gail is thirty two years of age and is employed full-time as a salesperson. She has been a member of the labor force for fourteen years, all of which have involved full-time employment. She began in the industry as a receptionist and progressed into outside sales and has been in her current position for one year. She states that "it's a demanding job. But it's fun." She was married for two and one half years prior to obtaining a divorce and remarried five years ago. She has one child who is two years of age. In terms of her family of origin, she is the eldest of five children and feels very close to her family. She describes her parents as having been very traditional and her father as having forbidden her mother from working because he did not wish to give his peers the impression that his wife needed to work in order for the family to survive financially. As the oldest child, she feels that she took a leadership role with her siblings and was

the one who "had to break the ice" with her parents when her siblings wanted to obtain parental permission in various matters.

The excerpts taken from the transcribed interviews with Gail and the analysis of each excerpt, are presented in Table 5. Table 6 presents a clustering of the second level abstractions into more abstract themes. The numbers shown in brackets below each theme indicate the specific excerpts from Table 5 which compose the thematic cluster. Table 6 is then followed by the overall synthesis of Gail's experience.

Table 5
Thematic Abstraction of Gail's Experience

	Excerpts From Protocols	Paraphrases	Themes
1.	Another area that kind of stands out is that he [i.e., spouse] has absolutely no responsibility when it comes to taking care of our son.	Views spouse as taking no responsibility for childcare.	Anger, frustration with spouse.
2.	We've only had our son for just over a year now and frankly, I think I'm gonna crumble under the pressure if things [i.e., marital problems] aren't rectified and things aren't sorted out soon . . .	Feels that she will not be able to cope much longer if problems within her marriage are not resolved soon.	Overload and stress.
3.	. . . he [i.e., spouse] won't talk to me about any of his problems but he certainly does when he's under the influence with his buddies. And his buddies let me know what it is that's bothering him and then when he sobers up, I'll try and address it.	Spouse is unwilling to discuss his problems with her; she attempts to discuss issues with him after receiving feedback from his friends.	Spouse's avoidance of relationship issues.
4.	So I instructed [the seniors in the company] that if I am to handle this account, I want it 100% and I will make the decisions and I don't want anyone interfering. . . . And so I thought: nobody else is volunteering, I might as well say I'll do it. But I want to do it my way. And they were quite upset by it. . . . But I want the account to prove that I can do it.	Desired to have complete control over account; wanted account in order to prove her abilities.	Need to control.
5.	And if I were to insist that my husband take over the responsibility of getting our son out [to the daycare], then I would've had rumbling in the homefront and I don't need that either.	Her insistence that her spouse take responsibility for getting their child to daycare would result in conflict; desires to avoid conflict.	Avoiding spousal confrontations.
6.	So you just end up with this circle where what you do is run around like a chicken with its - you know, just trying to keep ends together. And really being successful at just about nothing.	Overload of work; feels that she accomplishes very little.	Overload, frustration.
7.	. . . I found myself constantly put into the situation where I just throw my hands in the air and say: phh, I'll do it myself. And though you don't have the time and you don't have the space to be able to do that, you're taking it on anyway. . . . And it's really frustrating that you can't rely on somebody else to help you out with the load, sort of thing.	Attempts to assume responsibilities herself despite a lack of time; experiences frustration that spouse cannot be relied on to assist with household tasks.	Rescuing, need to control.
8.	. . . I have sort of a mothering instinct to begin with, where if I can do it [i.e., household tasks] I will do it and I'm really willing	Her willingness to assume household tasks resulted in difficulties, with spouse	Rescuing, need to control.

	to go along with it. . . . But I know that when our son came into the picture it sort of compounded things because my husband then . . . has to help out with what's going on. And I don't know if he's quite prepared to do that.	being unwilling to increase his assistance after their child was born.	
9.	And as it's turning out now, in order to meet some of our goals within the next five years - which is sort of a deadline that I've set - that I have to get out there and find some way of meeting the financial necessities, sort of thing.	Feels she must earn enough to meet the goals that she has set for the family.	Need to control; high need to achieve.
10.	I'm the strong one in the family. I'm the pillar, I guess, and he [i.e., spouse] just goes along with anything I say. Anything in as far as what we have and where we're going and what we're doing with it.	Feels that she assumes the dominant role and takes responsibility for decision-making within her marriage.	Need to control.
11.	And even the little things and I have to each time ask if he [i.e., spouse] would mind assisting. The little things are too much [for him].	Finds that she must continually request spouse's assistance with tasks.	Spousal passive aggression.
12.	But up to now, it [i.e., housework and childcare] is my responsibility except that my husband will do what he feels like doing, when he feels like doing it. . . . But it's certainly not something I can rely on to be a continuous thing.	Feels that she is largely responsible for household tasks and childcare; spouse's assistance cannot be relied upon to be continuous.	Spousal passive aggression.
13.	. . . for instance, we had to go out and just had to go out and buy a $1200 television set a year ago. I hate to restrict him [i.e., spouse] because it is his income that's coming into the household as well and if he were single - and I shouldn't have this mentality but I keep thinking that if he were single he'd do it for himself. So he has to be able to do it for himself now. . . . And it's sort of his way of maintaining control.	Dislikes restricting spouse's ability to spend his own income; views his insistence on spending his own income as his means of maintaining control.	Power struggle; spousal passive aggression.
14.	And then he [i.e., spouse] went out last year and bought a $24,000 car. We really didn't need it; we had 2 good running cars that were sporty and not so familyish but I didn't say anything . . . And then at the same time he feels I shouldn't have that right to tell him what he can or cannot spend, though I don't stop him from spending whatever he wants to spend.	Did not voice her disapproval of spouse's decision to purchase a new car; spouse feels that she shouldn't be able to influence his spending.	Power struggle; avoidance of relationship issues.
15.	When it comes to getting him [i.e., spouse] to assist with the financial end of things so that he can make decisions and know what's there . . . he doesn't want the responsibility because he's afraid of not doing it properly. . . . And just the way things are now, he certain-	Spouse is unwilling to assume responsibility for making financial decisions; she feels that he must assume responsibility because she lacks the time to assume all responsibilities.	Frustration and overload.

ly has to because I don't have time for it all.		
16. I don't leave him [i.e., son] in daycare, I leave him with a family member [i.e., her mother]. So I have absolutely no worries and he gets dropped off in the morning. I don't have to phone. I don't have to do anything. They will contact me.	Leaves son with her mother; views this as a worry-free arrangement.	Obtaining outside assistance with childcare.
17. . . . there's a lot of demand on my time because it's a sales position that involves a lot of leg work, a lot of pricing and that sort of thing. I find that I have to use a lot of my evening hours preparing and getting things ready.	Finds that her job makes large demands on her time; finds that much of her evening hours are spent in work-related activities.	Work-to-family spillover.
18. And I get a lot of support from my peers [at work] . . .	Receives much support from coworkers.	Supportive coworkers.
19. You're really stuck between a rock and a hard place when you have to make decisions between a sick child and an account closing tomorrow.	Experiences unresolvable conflict between parental and work roles when her child is ill.	Demands of child vs. demands of work.
20. . . . if I'm in a board room meeting and I'm called out to attend to a phone call and it's my sick child, I'll go tell them I've gotta go [and do] this and that and I'm fine.	Sometimes experiences intrusions at work when her child is ill.	Family-to-work spillover.
21. And for right now, my son is definitely priority and then my relationship, my family is next in line, and then my work.	Views her son as her first priority, followed by her marriage, her family, and then her job.	Child vs. spouse (devaluation of importance of spouse).
22. . . . I would really like to be the best I can be for myself [in my career] but at the same time I want to be able to provide the best I can for my son as mother too.	Wishes to realize her full potential in her career and also provide the best parenting she is capable of for her son.	High need to achieve; perfectionism.
23. I was kind of the - I had to break the ice [with my parents] on everything. I was the big sister and everybody looked up to me and either they were leaning on me to get the approval - get whatever ice broken with mom and dad - or they were jealous and envious of me because I got this and they didn't.	Assumed a dominant, leadership role with siblings; assumed responsibility.	Control orientation.
24. I would say they [i.e., employer] are [quite understanding]. . . . They're extremely tolerant [of family-related interferences at work] from what I've seen other employers of mine.	Views her employer as understanding and tolerant of family-related interferences at work.	Supportive employer.
25. I'm not there for a paycheck. I wanna be successful. So I think they [i.e., employer] realize that in me.	Desires to be successful in her job.	High need to achieve; personal meaning derived from work.
26. Well, . . . I'm losing weight. Losing weight	Experiences constant	Physical manifesta-

constantly. I would say it plays havoc on your nervous system.	weight loss.	tions of extreme stress.
27. My memory is certainly not what it can be and has been. . . . I tend to not be able to control my emotions like I want to be able to and like I certainly was able to at one time. If I even so much as think sadness I'm feeling sadness, whereas before I had full control of that. And I think it's just a way of venting. . . . even right now I can feel myself getting all jittery and mushy over something there's absolutely no reason to be. And it's just a sort of a nervous reaction.	Experiences poorer memory and less control over her emotions than in the past.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
28. At one time there about 6 months ago I actually went to the doctor to find out if there was a problem because I would get into new situations - and in this job you're constantly in new situations - but even so much as walking into someone's office and I'd get this uncontrollable shaking. Like I just could not control it. . . . And [the doctor said] that the more under stress I am, the more you'll see it [i.e., shaking].	Experiences uncontrollable shaking when under stress.	Physical manifestations of extreme stress.
29. . . . I've tried to ensure that I get my full eight hours rest and I don't let things bother me or if they do I handle them.	Tries to ensure that she obtains enough rest; deals with issues that are troubling her.	Taking care of herself.
30. I don't seem to find sort of that happy medium where you can look forward to something happy. It just doesn't seem to be there. . . . Like even so much as a family reunion or having someone to dinner. It's just more work. You know, it's not a happy occasion. It's not good like it used to be.	Experiences a lack of happiness in her life at present; special occasions are viewed as additional work.	Loss of happiness in life - overload.
31. But I'm finding now that I sort of have to preorganize things in advance to be ready for them.	Organizes in advance in order to be prepared for situations.	Forced changes in organization - stress management.
32. And anything that I'd like to do doesn't seem too important because usually something comes up that screws it up anyway.	Finds that her personal plans are usually interfered with by other events.	Anger, frustration, overload.
33. There's not a whole lot of things I do [for myself]. Like right now I really enjoy suntanning in those tan beds that everyone taboos. But I look at it as sort of a sanity break. It gives me a half hour break a couple times a week. And I'll do my utmost to be able to get to that tan booth.	Schedules time alone for self; views this as important to her	Importance of time for self.
34. . . . one of them [i.e., coping strategies] would be definitely to fend for myself and my son, which I consider part of myself.	Protects self and son and blocks out interference and negativity in the hope of	Avoidance of relationship issues.

And that is to block out whatever wants to interfere, sort of thing. If it's not positive it's not part of our life. And in hope that would keep me more positive.	maintaining a more positive attitude.	
35. . . . right now my husband's one of those things that are just very negative and very, you know, pulling us right down. And I see absolutely no reason for it and until he can decide where he wants to be I won't be there to support him.	Views spouse as a very negative influence at present; her support contingent upon his clarity of goals.	Spouse's negativity.
36. And we [i.e., she and her spouse] can try and get things going in the right direction and hopefully together, but if I have to do it on my own, I'll do it on my own.	Expresses determination to continue on alone if problems in her marriage cannot be resolved.	Need to control; independence.
37. I think as well I look for support from a lot of my friends and family [i.e., parents and siblings]. . . . And so they're really, really good leaning posts and if I have to I'll go and do my griping and my sobbing or whatever I want, on their shoulders. So it certainly helps me cope.	Views friends and family as very supportive; helps her to cope.	Supportive family and friends.
38. I used to be somewhat meticulous. . . . And now, nothing is important to me anymore, as far as how people take us [if the house is untidy]. They have to take us as we are or they're not the right people anyway, is my attitude.	Is no longer concerned with how others might view the level of tidiness in her home.	Changes in attitude toward housekeeping; guilt.
39. . . . if I don't have time to do the lunch dishes right after because we [i.e., she and her son] are gonna read a book instead, I will. And so, yeah, I've definitely slacked off on it [i.e., standards for housework].	Gives higher priority to activities with her son than to performing housework; has lowered her standards for housework.	Family management adjustments - prioritizing, lowered standards for housework; guilt.
40. . . . and sometimes you almost feel like it's deliberate. Like, he [i.e., spouse] knows I hate doing toilets so he'll leave the toilets.	Feels that spouse may deliberately leave her with household tasks that she dislikes doing.	Power struggle; spousal passive aggression.
41. You just have to keep an easy mind about it [i.e., tasks to be done]. It just can't all be done.	Tries to adopt a relaxed attitude toward tasks to be done.	Family management adjustments - flexibility in situation.
42. Oh no, they [i.e., family] wouldn't [put pressure on me to conform to their expectations]. They know I probably would do the exact opposite. I'm very strict in my own - in how I want to see things for myself.	Feels that her family would not exert pressure on her to conform to their expectations because she would behave in the opposite manner; strong need to choose for herself.	Need to control; reaction formation to authority.
43. And I don't want to go through this b.s. but the more I open up about it, I find, the more that I'm not the only person. . . . The more people you find out are out there, the better you feel.	Openness with others about her problems results in realization of common experience; awareness of others' similar experiences is comforting.	Awareness of common experience of others.
44. I think I'd like [to work] a few days a week	Desire to work fewer days	Desire to decrease

if I could get something 3 or 4 days a week and more or less at my own schedule.	per week and attain greater flexibility in her work hours.	hours worked.
45. If I know that I have a heavy Monday [at work], for instance, then a lot of times it can preoccupy my mind [on the weekend]. I find myself thinking about what I've gotta prepare or what I've gotta make sure to have ready.	Often preoccupied with work-related issues while at home if she anticipates a busy day at work the following day.	Work-to-family spill-over.
46. I mean, giving him [i.e., son] a bath or taking him to the park or that sort of thing, should be fun but it's not. It's something that has to be done and I find that it's something I'm squeezing into my spare time and that it feels like it's more work. I hope that I don't radiate that towards my son but it feels to me like it's work.	Finds that activities with her son are not enjoyable and feel like additional work.	Frustration, overload.
47. Sometimes I'd like to boot him [i.e., spouse] out. . . . But most of the time it's toleration. I just tolerate that he is who he is and he feels everything is fine. So I just put up with it.	Sometimes feels that she would like to be free of her spouse; finds that she often simply tolerates his behavior and his denial of their problems.	Anger toward spouse; avoidance of relationship issues.
48. I guess at times there would be hatred [that I experience] because I see it [i.e., spouse's unwillingness to assist with tasks] as laziness or as almost hatred from him that he doesn't care enough to do this. Frustration. Just - I feel that sometimes he's being very selfish and everything is centered around himself and that's the way men can have it, it seems.	Experiences frustration and occasional hatred toward spouse because she views his unwillingness to assist with tasks as due to laziness, resentment resulting in a lack of caring, or self-centeredness.	Power struggle; hatred of and frustration with spouse.
49. When I'm down, like when things are overwhelming me and I just sort of crumble and break, I get unlimited emotional support [from my husband]. . . . But when I'm on track I would say [I get] probably nothing. He's almost intimidated because I'm a very, very strong person and strong willed.	Receives unlimited emotional support from spouse when she is unable to cope but receives none when she is coping well; views spouse as somewhat intimidated by her strong personality and strong will.	Power struggle - inconsistent emotional support from spouse.
50. [My husband and I have m]aybe 4 or 5 hours a week [alone together], which is really next to nil when we're used to having all the time after work hours together.	Finds that she presently has very little time alone with her spouse.	Loss of quality in spousal relationship.
51. [When my husband and I have time alone together] I'm either burnt right out or I've got something bothering me on my mind or vice versa he does. So it ends up just in heated conversation. . . But we were tending to sort of avoid those - that time together because it just wasn't necessary. It was just a headache anyway. . . . it wasn't loving and caring and affection or anything like that.	Finds that time alone with spouse deteriorates into conflict; avoided time together because it was not enjoyable.	Avoidance of relationship issues.

52. I would definitely say that there's some tendency - especially when I'm high and when I'm strong, which is, I would say, 80% of the time, that there is some sense of intimidation and some envy almost [on my husband's part].	Feels that when she is coping well, her spouse is intimidated and envious of her.	Power struggle; high achiever vs. low achiever.
53. I try damn hard and I don't think of myself really when I'm out striving to do or to succeed at whatever it is I'm doing. I'm just giving it my best and my all and whereas my hubby tends to sometimes slack off. And I'm not quite sure where it comes from but sometimes it seems that he would much prefer to have things handed to him and appear to be the winner than to be the one that's actually done it.	Feels that she strives to achieve whereas her spouse does not.	Power struggle; high achiever vs. low achiever.
54. . . . he [i.e., spouse] says he feels that it [i.e., his increased drinking with friends] was happening because he had nothing to come home to. He hated coming home and it was getting worse and worse. That I didn't really pay head to him even being there.	Spouse's drinking increased because he felt that she was inattentive toward him at home.	Spouse seeking outside support.
55. . . . but now I'm splitting it [i.e., attention] between him [i.e., spouse] and our son and he [i.e., spouse] just doesn't - he hasn't accepted that so far.	Feels that her spouse has not accepted that her attention must now be divided between him and their son.	Child vs. spouse (marital conflict).
56. So what we're going to do to compromise is that he's gonna bring the meal home or he's gonna start the meal because I have to pick up our son. So he's definitely going to - he sort of had those duties anyway but they were very rarely adhered to.	Use of compromise and cooperation as a couple in order to solve problems.	Family management adjustments - finding creative solutions.
57. And when I come in the door at night he [i.e., son] is full of hugs for me. So, if anything, I think it [i.e., her working] will just make him a stronger [person] - like he knows I'm not gonna leave him forever.	Feels that her son will be a stronger person as a result of her working.	Positive rationalization.
58. Well, I know that I'd never leave our son with him [i.e., spouse] for any length of time because he has a very bad temper. And when his temper goes, it doesn't matter what's in his way. So, as far as childcare that way, yeah, I'd probably have a tendency to not feel comfortable with it. . . . And he's admitted it too. He knows that he can't control his temper.	Feels that she could never leave her son with her spouse for any length of time because of her spouse's inability to control his temper.	Perception of spousal inadequacy in parenting.
59. When you find out there's others out there that are going through the whole thing on the same damn thing, then you get ideas and advice on what you should do and how and when. And you try and experiment different things and it seems to all come together. Slowly. I'm told it	Finds that she obtains ideas and advice from others in her situation; experiments with ideas.	Getting ideas and advice from others; hope.

will.		
60. We [i.e., she and her spouse] have gotta put effort into making things [in the marriage] great, sort of thing. And keeping things great, I guess.	Awareness of need to work at making their marriage satisfying.	Despondency about marital relationship.

Table 6
Thematic Clusters of Gail's Experience

1. Marital difficulties
   (1, 3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21, 35, 40, 47, 48, 49, 52, 53, 55, 58, 60)

2. Stress, overload, frustration
   (2, 6, 15, 32, 46)

3. Personality patterns influenced by experiences in family of origin
   (4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 22, 23, 25, 36, 42)

4. Avoidance of confrontations and conflict
   (5, 34, 47, 51)

5. Management of role conflicts
   (16, 18, 24, 29, 31, 33, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 56, 59)

6. Spillover
   (17, 20, 45)

7. Work-parental role conflict and child-related guilt
   (19)

8. Manifestations of extreme stress
   (26, 27, 28)

9. Loss of quality of life
   (30, 50)

10. Desire to decrease level of work involvement
    (44)

11. Spouse reacting to her working
    (54)

12. Rationalization of impact of working
    (57)

Overall Synthesis of Gail's Experience

Gail experiences high levels of stress and overload as a result of the role conflict in her life. She feels that she will not be able to cope much longer if problems within her marriage are not resolved soon. She experiences frustration in her attempts to cope with the overload of tasks and demands and feels that she ultimately accomplishes very little. As a result of the overload she experiences, she also finds that activities with her son which should be enjoyable (e.g., bathing him or taking him to the park) actually feel like additional work. She also experiences anger and frustration that her personal plans are usually interfered with by other events or circumstances.

At times, Gail also experiences conflict between her parental and work roles. This conflict takes the form of a dilemma of choice between both roles when her son is ill.

As a result of the high level of stress in her life, Gail experiences poorer memory and less control over her emotions than in the past. She also experiences constant weight loss and finds that a condition involving uncontrollable shaking can be precipitated by stress and anxiety.

She also experiences a loss of quality in her life. She finds that there is a general lack of happiness in her life at present and that occasions which should be enjoyable (e.g., a family reunion or having someone to dinner) actually feel like additional work. Additionally, she finds that she presently has very little time for herself or alone with her spouse. Moreover, time alone with her spouse is compromised by conflict or feelings of exhaustion.

Another consequence of role conflict for Gail is spillover. In terms of work-to-family spillover, she finds that her job makes large demands on her time

and that much of her evening hours must be used for work-related activities. She also finds that she is often preoccupied with work-related issues when at home if she anticipates a busy day at work the following day. Family-to-work spillover is evident in that she sometimes experiences intrusions at work (i.e., phone calls) when her son is ill.

An additional consequence of role conflict for Gail involves her spouse's reaction (i.e., seeking outside support) to her inattentiveness toward him when she is involved in work-related activities at home. As a result of the role conflict that she experiences, she also wishes to decrease her level of work involvement and attain greater flexibility in her work hours.

Gail's need to control and high need to achieve exacerbate her role conflicts and appear to have been influenced by her experiences within her family of origin. She assumes the dominant role and takes responsibility for decision-making within her marriage. A control orientation is evident in the dominant, leadership role she assumed with her siblings within her family of origin. Rescuing and a need to control are evident in her attempts to assume additional domestic responsibilities herself, despite lacking the time to do so. Her rescuing and need to control have resulted in a situation where her spouse has been unwilling to increase his level of assistance following the birth of their son. A need to control is also apparent in her determination to continue on alone if the problems in her marriage cannot be resolved. Her need to control is also evident at work, where she demonstrates a need to have complete control of an account if it is assigned to her.

She also derives significant personal meaning from her work and her high need to achieve is evident in her desire to be successful and realize her

full potential in her career, as well as provide the best parenting she is capable of for her son. Her high need to achieve is also evident in her establishment of a five year deadline for the family's achievement of certain goals.

Marital difficulties also contribute to Gail's role conflicts. She experiences anger, frustration, and occasional hatred toward her spouse because of his unwillingness to assume any responsibility for childcare and his general unwillingness to assist with household tasks. She sometimes feels that she would like to be unburdened of him but finds that she often simply tolerates his behavior and his denial of problems within their relationship. Moreover, she is frustrated because of the overload of responsibilities she must assume and feels that her spouse is unwilling to assume responsibility for making financial decisions because of his fear of not performing it properly. She also feels that his tendency to want to have the freedom to spend their income is his means of establishing control in the family, suggesting the existence of a power struggle. His passive aggression is evident in that she finds that she must continually request his assistance and cannot rely upon his assistance to be continuous. Moreover, she feels that he will deliberately leave her with household tasks that she dislikes doing.

She also views her spouse as a very negative influence at present and her resentment is evident in her refusal to be supportive of him until he is able to resolve his personal issues and decide if he wishes to remain in the marriage. Additionally, she views her son as being a higher priority than her spouse, suggesting both her resentment and her devaluation of the importance of her spouse. Her perception of her spouse as possessing an inadequacy in parenting is also evident in her belief that she could never leave her son with

her spouse for any length of time because of her spouse's inability to control his temper. A lack of communication is also evident within the relationship. She finds that her spouse is unwilling to discuss his problems with her and she attempts to discuss issues with him after obtaining feedback from his friends. She also finds that she receives unlimited emotional support from her spouse when she is unable to cope but receives none when she is coping well. She feels that when she is coping well, her spouse is intimidated by her strong personality and her strong will and envious of her, suggesting both a power struggle and a high achiever/low achiever dynamic within the marriage. This high achiever/low achiever dynamic is also evident in her criticisms of her spouse's work habits (i.e., she views him as tending to "slack off" at times and as wishing to receive accolades without working for them). Although Gail is aware of their need to work at making their marriage satisfying, she expresses some despondency about her marriage.

In attempting to deal with her role conflicts, Gail uses both rationalization (e.g., she feels that her working will make her son a stronger person) and avoidance. Her avoidance of relationship issues and spousal confrontations is evident in her willingness to take on any responsibilities associated with their child in order to avoid conflict with her spouse. Her avoidance is also evident in her attempts to "block out" interference and negativity from her spouse and in her avoidance of time alone with him because of the conflict which results.

Gail also uses a number of other strategies to manage her role conflicts. These include receiving support from others (e.g., family, friends, coworkers, and her employer); ensuring that she obtains enough rest and deals with issues that are troubling her; obtaining assistance from others outside of the family;

scheduling time alone for herself; organizing in advance in order to be prepared for situations; maintaining a relaxed attitude toward housekeeping and other tasks to be done; lowering her standards for the home; prioritizing activities; being open with other women and deriving comfort from their similar experiences; fostering compromise and cooperation as a couple in order to solve problems; and experimenting with ideas and advice obtained from others in her situation.

Andrea

Personal Information

Andrea is thirty four years of age and employed full-time as an educational consultant. She has worked full-time for eleven years and part-time for seven years and has been in her present position for six years. She has been married for four years and has a two year old child. In terms of her family of origin, she is the second of four children and has an older sister. She describes her parents as "quite good friends", "fairly liberal-minded", and very supportive. She states that during her upbringing, her father "was never home" because of the demands of his job as a senior executive and that her mother "yelled and screamed a lot" because of the stresses created by this lifestyle. Andrea also feels that she took a leadership role as a child and was also given a considerable amount of responsibility for caring for her two younger brothers. She feels that she and her sister were very strictly disciplined as children but that her parents "completely relaxed their parenting" with her younger siblings. As a result of her brothers' undisciplined nature, she felt that she needed to discipline them.

The excerpts taken from the transcribed interviews with Andrea and the analysis of each excerpt, are presented in Table 7. Table 8 presents a clustering of the second level abstractions into more abstract themes. The numbers shown in brackets below each theme indicate the specific excerpts from Table 7 which compose the thematic cluster. Table 8 is then followed by the overall synthesis of Andrea's experience.

Table 7
Thematic Abstraction of Andrea's Experience

	Excerpts From Protocols	Paraphrases	Themes
1.	Memory is a really big thing. I find I've lost - I don't have the energy to remember the details and a coworker said to me the other day - she laughed because I couldn't even remember a child I had assessed a month ago.	Experiences poorer memory; lacks energy to remember details.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
2.	The time element is really hard. I work in a job where the expectation is that I do a ton of overtime. . . . I meet [with teachers] virtually every lunch hour and every day after school and it's just - it's really stressful.	Is required to work much overtime in her job; finds this very stressful.	Work stress and overload.
3.	So it's like 15 hours where often in a day I literally don't get more than a 10 minute break, you know, every 4 or 5 hours. And I am fried. I find I'm just this frazzled person.	Has little time to rest during her day; experiences extreme exhaustion.	Overload and stress.
4.	. . . a clean house means nothing to me. I clean the bathrooms once a month. They look disgusting but I don't care. . . . So I'm not caught up in all that stuff. I really just do the basics and I try to prioritize.	Unconcerned with the level of tidiness in her home; tries to prioritize.	Changes in housekeeping.
5.	Our daughter comes first more than she probably should. . . . But when you're both working you really try when you have those 3 hours after work to do nothing but focus on the child. And then when she goes to bed that's the time for your relationship and boy, I'll tell you, that's the last thing on my mind. And my husband's too. You know, we're both tired. We sit in front of the t.v. and we just - we're like vegetables until we fall asleep and then we go to bed. It's just this crazy life.	Higher priority given to spending time with child; feelings of exhaustion compromise time alone with spouse.	Child vs. spouse (loss of quality in spousal relationship).
6.	. . . what I find is that if we hadn't had a lot of fun and hadn't had that strong relationship before [we had children], now that I'm in the midst of this, there are many days where I think: you [i.e., spouse] could leave tomorrow and I'd say: see you later. One less person to worry about. . . . Because we have nothing. It's pretty frightening.	Experiences times when she would not be upset by spouse's leaving; feels that they presently have no time for their relationship.	Loss of quality in spousal relationship.
7.	So now that I am tired and have no time, I just don't have the energy to be sensitive or to be careful about how I word things. I just say them flat out. No discussion. That's how it is. Or I will have a nervous	Finds that because she is exhausted and lacks time, she speaks bluntly and directively to spouse; expects spouse to respond immediately or she	Extreme stress and overload.

	breakdown. I mean, that's kind of the point we've reached. And we just kind of survive at that level. . . . I just expect him [i.e., spouse] to be right there or I will go crazy.	will reach a crisis point.	
8.	I often think it must be frustrating to them [i.e., friends] because I've always been there for them and now I honestly feel like I'm not or not always when they need me to be. It's tough.	Finds that she is not available to her friends as she was in the past.	Overload and frustration.
9.	And I went through a phase in probably February or March where I was fairly depressed . . . and I realized that I was, not clinically, but just really sad all the time.	Experienced depression.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
10.	. . . every once in a while I just stop and I say: you can't do it all, so decide what you want to do, decide what's important and do that and try and let people know. But that's - if they [i.e., friends] are not happy with that, that is their problem; it's not mine. . . . But I'm me and that's all I can do. It's kind of a survival thing.	Realizes that she cannot attend to everything and must prioritize; not concerned with how friends might feel as a result of her lack of time for them.	New family management strategies - prioritizing.
11.	There are positive aspects to this. I'm a stronger person.	Feels that she has become a stronger person.	Positive rationalization.
12.	You know, by 8:00 this morning I had the laundry done, I had phoned Toronto to rent all the baby equipment I need for when I'm down there. I had organized rental vehicles. I had phoned the doctor to get an appointment for my daughter. I mean, I do amazing things by 8:00 in the morning and I used to waste my whole life.	Finds that she is now more organized than in the past.	Changes in housekeeping - organizational skills.
13.	Never would I have guessed that sleep deprivation can do such horrible things to you. And it truly does. And what's hard is that you never get out of that.	Finds that sleep deprivation is a continual problem.	Overload and stress.
14.	I watch him [i.e., spouse] really closely and if I see him taking an interest in some aspect of our daughter's upbringing then I try to back off. I'm a very controlling person. I just try to stop myself and back off and let him be.	Attempts to relinquish control if spouse takes an interest in an aspect of daughter's upbringing.	Family management adjustments - relinquishing control.
15.	. . . And I talk about what I'm going through. I talk about it lots but he [i.e., spouse] doesn't. . . . He never mentions that he's upset about this, that, or the other thing. But in fact he is. He's not very skilled at talking about those things.	Feels that she verbalizes her feelings but that spouse lacks this ability.	Spousal communication problems.
16.	I find I am often angry and have to get rid of that or have to diffuse it somehow or it builds up just like that. . . . I deal with issues much more quickly now because	Finds that she is often angry and deals with issues more quickly now because she becomes instantly angry or up-	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.

I am just instantly angry or instantly upset.	set.	
17. I do cry more now than I did in the past.	Feels she cries more now than in the past.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
18. So I'm not a person who's really good at expressing my anger as I feel it or saying: now, this is really bugging me; can we talk about this? Nor is my husband very good about picking up on it at that level. It has to be more of a crisis for him to really take it seriously. And that's probably a bad pattern we've gotten into	Feels she is poor at expressing her anger and that spouse is poor at detecting it.	Lack of communication within marriage.
19. I often think: you know, you have to be careful because you might go through some sort of nervous breakdown. You're just running yourself ragged.	Often fears for her psychological well-being because of overload.	Extreme stress and overload.
20. . . . I don't find I can do anything about it [i.e., stress] except be aware of how bad it's getting and try and do something about it when it's reaching a bad level.	Finds that there is little she can do to control the stress level in her life.	Overload, frustration, helplessness.
21. . . . I am a fairly controlling person but at least I know it. At least I admit it. So I've often thought: I wish my husband would do more but I don't want to give up the control. . . . I'm not necessarily prepared yet to give up that control. And until I am, then I can't lay that on him. I can't say: you're not doing your share.	Wishes that spouse would increase his assistance but is aware that she is unwilling to relinquish control.	Need to control.
22. . . . in terms of my family dynamics as I was growing up, I probably was a fairly controlling person. . . . I was always the one that babysat the younger brothers. I had a lot of control over them. They always called me the bag. . . . but boy, I disciplined those poor boys like they'd never been disciplined before. . . . they were very undisciplined and I'm quite certain that at some level I identified that and decided someone had to discipline these poor children. I was encouraged to babysit them. In fact I had to. That was my job. And so I suspect I got lots of reinforcement for being a pretty controlling person as I grew up.	Describes herself as a controlling person during her upbringing; exercised much control over younger brothers; feels she was reinforced for being a controlling person.	Need to control.
23. I'm still very controlling with the babysitter. The poor babysitter. I'm sure she's never met anyone like me in her life. . . . And so my controlling kind of has moved away from my husband and onto the babysitter a little bit.	Feels that she is very controlling with the babysitter and that her controlling has shifted from her spouse to the babysitter.	Need to control.
24. And so as hard as it was, I started interviewing day homes [for my daughter] and it was horrendous. And I took	Took complete control of task of interviewing day homes for her daughter.	Need to control.

complete control.		
25. I mean, I was a lunatic for the first time in my life [when I was interviewing day homes]. I was actually having paranoid hallucinations. . . I would say to my husband: I bet - they [i.e., people at the day-home] have no girls [that they babysit]; I bet they only want her because they are gonna move and one day I'll go to that house and she won't be there. They will have moved. And I believed that. I mean, I truly believed that, I'm embarrassed to say.	Experienced paranoid thoughts that people at day home would abduct her daughter.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
26. . . . I have had to relinquish tons and tons of control. And I laugh about it as I do it because if you don't then you will be a lunatic. . . . all that control that I'd love to have over my own routine, I no longer have because my routine is dictated by my daughter's routine. . . . There are days where I'm pretty bitter about it or angry about it but the practical side of me usually kicks in and just goes: oh well, that's life.	Has had to relinquish much control because her routine is dictated by her daughter's routine; experiences bitterness and anger over this at times but usually realizes that the situation is unavoidable.	Family management adjustments - flexibility in situation.
27. I would rather hear it [i.e., coworkers' comments about her] than not because . . . if people don't say things but they act in certain ways, you often think: gee, I bet they're looking at me and thinking: why can't she sit on more committees? Why can't she stay later? or Why this? Why that? And that does frustrate me and bother me.	Concerned with coworkers' perceptions of her.	Other-directedness.
28. What you are actually doing is hiring a total stranger to have your kid all day, every day. That was probably the hardest of all the things I had to deal with.	Experienced inner conflict over placing her child in a day home.	Anxiety/guilt about child.
29. Again, there are some aspects from my highly controlling nature in terms of housework. So we have a hard pattern in our house. . . . And so through the summer there's always been this bad pattern where I do it all [because I'm not working]. And then it's real hard to make the transition again [when I begin work again in the fall]. And so we're constantly dealing with that.	Performs all housework during summer months; finds it difficult to alter this pattern when she returns to work.	Need to control resulting in maladaptive pattern.
30. But we discussed having a maid and in the fall, if our pattern continues, I will be hiring a maid. I do believe that there are things, sacrifices in terms of money, that you have to make and I really don't care the expense because I think that we have enough on our plate without doing housework.	Awareness of need to hire outside help if pattern continues.	New family management strategies - hiring outside help.

31. But I must say, I'm better about just saying: it [i.e., housework] has to get done, I am just going to do it. I can't wait any longer. And my husband will wait me out because he knows [I will do it].	Feels that she is more motivated to do housework; feels that spouse will wait for her to do it.	Trapped by her own control; spousal passive aggression.
32. But if I stay home - like sometimes I just want to be around the house and relax and read a book or something - if I do, I don't get the break. So now I make the announcement: I'm gonna be upstairs reading a book. I don't want to be disturbed. . . . Pretend I'm not here. That's kind of how I've dealt with it.	Finds that if she remains at home she does not have time alone; deals with this by informing spouse that she does not wish to be disturbed.	Family management adjustments - securing time for self at home.
33. Oh yeah [overall, I do a larger share of the housework], by far. Like maybe 75%.	Feels that she performs a larger share of housework.	Inequity in housework.
34. And I guess that in terms of the unfair split, the thing that makes me angriest - and it always will bug me - is that if I want the split to be fair I have to initiate. Like, it's on my shoulders to say: I don't want to be doing all this, please do more. And I often think it's easier to do it yourself and you hear that all the time and it is true. It's often easier to do it myself than to try and get my husband, to try and get him to do it. . . . But he waits until I ask.	Feels that in order to achieve equitable role sharing she must request spouse's assistance; often feels it is easier to do tasks herself; feels that spouse waits for her to ask.	Results of self-defeating control; lack of cooperation.
35. I think he [i.e., spouse] should be better about initiating but I have to understand too that I often do jump in really quickly just because I want things done or I want them done on schedule. . . . And so that's something that I will always have to be aware of and constantly deal with.	Awareness that although spouse should initiate more, she is quick to intervene in tasks.	Need to control.
36. I'm a pretty independent person and I must say I've always had this sense that I could do it without him [i.e., spouse]. But I think that kind of helps sometimes because I think: I could leave you tomorrow and I would be okay. I don't have the sense that I need him to survive.	Views herself as independent and able to cope without spouse.	Individuation; inability to commit in relationship.
37. . . . we have a fairly traditional relationship. I certainly wouldn't call it a modern one. . . . But I have a lot of conflict about being a modern-day woman and having a modern-day relationship. And we don't particularly have that.	Describes spousal relationship as quite traditional; experiences much conflict over being a non-traditional woman and not possessing a non-traditional relationship.	Dissatisfaction with having a traditional marriage.
38. . . . I try to maintain my independence, which is partly why I'll never give up working. Because I never want to be in a position where I feel I cannot cope alone. . . . But yeah, I never want to feel like I rely on him [i.e., spouse].	Importance of working as a means of maintaining independence; unwillingness to be dependent on spouse.	Individuation; fear of dependency.

39. I guess that what I viewed as more of an issue [between my husband and I] is that - and I think it was for him too more than the money [i.e., that she earned a larger salary than him] - is that I am more of a professional than him.	Views her more professional career and higher salary as issues within her spousal relationship.	Competitiveness, power struggle; high achiever vs. low achiever.
40. And he [i.e., spouse] does not like his job. He does not like what he does. . . . I don't think he's a person that likes to work. He loves to play. . . . He thinks he may like to be a lawyer or he may like to be this or that. I don't think he has what it takes because he's just not motivated enough to do it . . .	Views spouse as disliking both his work and working in general; views him as lacking motivation.	High achiever vs. low achiever.
41. And I also, you know, whatever I do I try and do it really well. . . . He [i.e., spouse] has a completely different sense of studying and working than I do. That's been drilled in me since day one: if you're gonna do something, do it well. And my husband doesn't have that.	Perfectionism strongly influenced by parents; views spouse as lacking motivation to do things well.	High achiever vs. low achiever; difference becomes a deficiency.
42. It [i.e., her profession] is who I am which was why it was such a struggle to stay home on a maternity leave. Who I am as an educational consultant and working with a lot of other professionals and children. And as long as I was home I wasn't viewed that way and I was desperate to get back to that. And so when I'm in a social setting I want to be viewed as a professional who likes to talk about what happens at work and how fun it is and the things I do and the things the kids do.	Identifies strongly with her profession; experienced difficulty remaining at home because she felt she was not viewed as a professional; wishes to be viewed as a professional when in social situations.	Individuation; strong need to identify with profession - reinforcement.
43. I have a big support system built up around me and my mom and dad are probably the mainstays of that.	Possesses a large support network; parents as a major source of support.	Outside support - parental.
44. He [i.e., spouse] comes from a family where his father gave zero emotional support to his mother. He has no idea even how to give it to me. . . . And so I could get frustrated by it and sometimes I do. . . . And when the bottom really falls out for me he is there 100%. . . . So, I mean, the bottom line is that he is there if I need him but he's probably not there for the day-to-day stuff in quite the way that I might like him to be.	Experiences frustration as a result of spouse's inability to provide emotional support; views emotional support as ample when she is unable to cope but as inadequate for daily problems that arise.	Power struggle; inconsistent emotional support from spouse.
45. I think there are probably times when I become a bit down and depressed and I suspect that that's partly a function of not getting some of the immediate support that I could use at home. I have to seek it elsewhere and of course everyone else is busy in their lives.	Partially attributes her depressed moods to receiving insufficient emotional support from spouse.	Lack of emotional support from spouse.

46. Because my mom and dad are so close, we conscientiously try to have our daughter go [over] when one or the other of us says: boy, I'd sure like to just go out and eat or I'd really like to go to a movie or something. . . . We just call and see or get a babysitter.	Has parents or other outside help assist with childcare when she and her spouse wish to have time alone together.	Obtaining outside assistance with childcare.
47. I often think: gee, you know, wouldn't it be nice if we could just go for a walk in the evening and not think: oh, we either have to do it when our daughter is up or we can't do it. . . . Those are the things that you just don't do anymore.	Finds that they are unable to engage in certain activities as a couple due to the constraints imposed by their child.	Loss of quality in spousal relationship.
48. But I definitely was the child that took the leadership role. Who knows why.	Assumed leadership role as a child.	Control orientation.
49. Oh [I experience] tons [of conflict with other staff at work]. Everyone's under a lot of stress. We're at each other's throats constantly. I think most of us are professionals and there's lots of egos involved.	Experiences much conflict with coworkers; views herself and others as being under a high level of stress.	High work stress (problems at work).
50. There are lots of conflicts with the parents [in my job]. They're extremely distressed over the condition of their kid. . . . So no matter what I do it is not enough and they are really angry.	Experiences much conflict with parents in her job; views them as very angry and having unrealistic expectations of her.	Overload and frustration (problems at work).
51. I mean, my feeling is, in a program like that, the expectations of all of us are far more than we can do. And that is why we're at each other's throats a lot because we're all under this incredible stress.	Views employer's expectations as unrealistically high, stress-inducing, and responsible for conflict at work.	Awareness of overload and extreme work stress.
52. Oh yeah, [I would like to decrease my work involvement]. . . . If I won the lottery I'd quit tomorrow. Much as I like my job I would quit because my sense is that when I work so much I have no time to do those things that I enjoy doing.	Expresses a desire to decrease her work involvement; views demands of work as preventing her from engaging in activities she enjoys.	Desire to decrease hours worked.
53. I have no desire to go back [to work] nor do I particularly - I'm not even looking forward to it. . . . Not that I don't still like the job and when I get back there I'll get excited and get into it. But I'm not really crazy about going because all I can think of is that our life is gonna go from being fairly stress-free for both of us . . . to this crazy lifestyle.	Lack of desire to return to work because of attendant increase in stress.	Work stress; frustration; ambivalence.
54. Well, my child does get sick. And I have an agreement with the babysitter that if she has a fever and she's fairly miserable, I won't just drop her off there [and will stay home with her].	Will remain at home with her child if she becomes seriously ill.	Family-to-work spillover.

55. . . . my family takes so much energy from me that I have little to give at work . . . And that's something I will struggle with through this period when I have very young children. And there's nothing you can do about it really.	Family demands result in energy deficit at work; finds she is unable to change this situation.	Family-to-work spill-over; resignation.
56. I'm expected to be at the school in the evenings for meetings, for workshops and that means that my husband has to stay home with our daughter and he may resent that.	Finds she is sometimes expected to remain at work during evening hours; feels that spouse may resent having to remain at home to care for daughter.	Work-to-family spill-over.
57. So there is incredible amounts of paperwork involved [at work] and . . . . the pressure is there for every one of us, including teachers, to do all our paperwork at home. And I can't do it. . . . I know I used to do my reports at home and I just can't do it anymore because I'm fried by the time my daughter is in bed. I absolutely couldn't write them. So now I'm faced with finding some time to do them and I don't know when.	Feels pressure to do all of her paperwork at home; feels too exhausted to do paperwork at home because of demands of parenting; unsure of where she will find time.	Overload, stress, frustration.
58. I deal with kids all day and they get so much of my energy. Sometimes, you know, I come home with my daughter, the last thing I want to do is play. And so it's a real emotional or psychological thing I do. So that from work, that it's really hard to come home to kids again.	Demands of work result in energy deficit at home when dealing with her daughter.	Work-to-family spill-over; ambivalence.
59. Like, I see him [i.e., spouse] not dealing with all this way more than me even though the stress is more on me. Because I'm really aware of everything and he's a person that just kind of shuts it all out and acts like nothing has changed and nothing is going on. And it's just piling up on top of him.	Views spouse as avoiding dealing with changes that have occurred.	Criticism of spouse - spouse's avoidance/ denial of issues.
60. But I know that as soon as I get into work, as soon as the pressure is on, I will get sick. And so now I have to start taking vitamins now so that I can fight that to some degree. Like, I find I have to be really preventative in terms of my health.	Feels that when work becomes stressful she will become ill; adopts a preventative approach to her health.	Taking care of herself.
61. . . . I find that my emotional state of mind is more extreme than it used to be. When I'm sad I'm sadder than I ever was before. And when I'm angry I'm angrier than I ever was before. . . . But my emotions are - they're much stronger. And I can't control them as well. I used to be able to talk myself out of a depressed state and make myself be happy and then	Experiences more extreme emotions and less control over them than in the past; realizes that she is sometimes depressed and cannot change her mood.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.

	it would go away. And I just can't do that anymore. . . . But I do really notice this - this kind of: all of a sudden I realize that I'm really sad. For 2 or 3 days I can't get myself out of it.		
62.	I notice that she [i.e., daughter] is stressed by keeping that same schedule that we have. So by Thursday and Friday I have to wake her up, she doesn't wake up spontaneously. And she's not as happy. . . . And also January to June I noticed May and June she was a bit sicker. And a bit unhappier generally and just - nothing you could pinpoint but she just wasn't quite herself.	Finds that daughter is stressed and less happy by having to conform to their time schedule; finds that daughter is sometimes sicker, less happy, and not herself.	Child reacting to changes associated with her working.
63.	And another effect is that she [i.e., daughter] is very different with me through the school year than she was in the summer. . . . But through the school year on the weekends she was as clingy as she could be. . . . And she was like that for about a week into the summer and then she's just this little independent person that plays on her own.	Found that during the period that she was working, her daughter was "clingy" but that during the summer she became independent.	Child reacting to her absence.
64.	When we're home I really try to spend quality time with her [i.e., daughter] but she goes to bed at 7:30 or 8:00. We don't finish eating till 6:30 so it doesn't leave you much time.	Finds she has little time to spend with her daughter in the evenings.	Child vs. work.
65.	On the positive side though, she's a very independent child and she's not - she doesn't make strange and she's very sociable and I think some of those skills are as a result of being on the go and being exposed to other kids.	Views daughter as very independent and sociable; feels that some of these skills are a result of her being in a day home.	Positive rationalization.
66.	I get her [i.e., daughter] up extra early so that I'm not rushing with her. . . . I want her to be relaxed when she's home and relaxed when she gets there [i.e., day home]. . . . But, I mean, she gets up an extra half hour early so that I can spend that time with her.	Spends additional time with daughter in the morning to avoid rushing with her.	Family management adjustments - spending more time with child.
67.	Well, I'm sure [I experience] some guilt [over the negative effects that my working has on my child]. I'm not a really guilt-ridden person but if there's something that gets to me - I occasionally think: what are we doing?	Experiences guilt over negative effects that working has on her child.	Guilt over impact of absence on child.
68.	But then I can instantly rationalize it [i.e., guilt experienced over the negative effects that her working has on her child] because I say: everyone else does it, why can't I? I don't for a minute fool myself.	Aware of rationalizing guilt associated with working.	Rationalization of guilt about absence.

69. You just can't know [if your child will be harmed by your working]. You have to do what you do and carry on. I'll never know if it was better to stay home because I won't have done it.	Feelings of uncertainty about the impact that her working will have on her child.	Anxiety/guilt about absence and impact on child.
70. I probably have 10 hours of free time maximum a week. That's being very liberal. Yeah, I have almost none.	Feels she has little free time for herself.	Lack of time for self.
71. Now when I get free time, I have to leave the house. And I make sure it's things that I really enjoy doing. . . . And so that's how I think I probably survive because I live for those times.	Ensures that free time is spent in enjoyable activities; feels that her free time enables her to cope.	Importance of time for self.
72. When I really need more time, when I'm tired, then I get angrier and angrier about it [i.e., not having enough time to herself]. . . . I say [to my husband that] I absolutely need more time and for a while that does happen then and then gradually the support goes away. . . . So it is a fairly cyclical thing.	Experiences an accumulation of anger when she has insufficient time for herself; initial support from spouse gradually disappears; views this pattern as cyclical.	Inconsistent assistance from spouse.
73. And neither of us [i.e., she and her spouse] are particularly happy, not necessarily with each other but just not happy generally. . . . And so I think when you're like that your marriage can't possibly be great.	Views herself and her spouse as unhappy and their marriage as less than satisfying.	Loss of quality in spousal relationship.
74. . . . we need to put some time into our relationship because we've put lots of time into our daughter and she's a healthy - emotionally I think she's a very happy, healthy child. So it's time that we worked on ourselves.	Aware of need to invest more time in spousal relationship.	Family management adjustments - needing to invest more time in spousal relationship.
75. When I am tired I just think that my life has come to an end and everything bugs me. And I can sit at home and stew. I can imagine things that aren't going on. I can just be, you know, really in a mess.	When fatigued, she feels that her life is unfulfilling and she can worry and imagine things.	Psychological manifestations of extreme stress.
76. I do have a good work ethic and I come from a family where my father modeled not only an extremely strong work ethic - to our detriment probably - but a real sense of professionalism. And I really try to live up to that.	Views herself as possessing a strong work ethic as modeled by her father; strives to meet this standard.	Source of learned high need to achieve and perfectionism.
77. Then so if I think I'm not [living up to my strong work ethic], it distresses me a great deal. And if I think that other people don't think I'm living up to that, whether I am or not, it also distresses me.	Experiences much distress when she feels that she is not fulfilling her strong work ethic or feels that others view her as not fulfilling it.	Perfectionism, other-directedness.
78. He [i.e., spouse] was quite threatened by that [i.e., that she made more money than him], as I think he is threatened by the fact that I have a fairly responsible	Feels that spouse was threatened by her higher salary and is presently threatened by the responsibility associated with	Competitiveness/power struggle within marriage; high achiever vs. low achiever.

	job.	her work.	
79.	I may have been a kid that, being the middle child, maybe learned early on that in order to get in the limelight with my parents, you know, if I go the straight and narrow, they like that. . . . And so I did go the straight and narrow and I was really reinforced for that . . .	Strove to gain parents' approval by conforming to their expectations.	Other-directedness; "pleasing" parents.
80.	He [i.e., spouse] is fairly traditional and he's fairly self-centered.	Views spouse as quite traditional and self-centered.	Frustration, anger with spouse.
81.	. . . so I'd say in terms of housework and childcare, we probably have a fairly dysfunctional relationship at this point. We don't communicate real clearly and it's left up to me [to ask for assistance] and then of course, from his view then I'm just this horrible nag who - interactions that we have revolve around who's doing most of the work.	Views their relationship as quite dysfunctional in terms of role sharing; feels that they do not communicate well and that she must request assistance; spouse then views her as "nagging".	Frustration with spouse (assistance dilemma).
82.	. . . that [dysfunctional pattern] is something that was established early on in our relationship and it's partly my fault because I may have let it go and then thought: you know, as things get tougher we'll change it but it's just not that easy to change patterns. And it isn't all his fault. I mean, I've bought into that pattern too. So if we're gonna change it we both have to work at it.	Feels partially responsible for dysfunctional pattern established early in their relationship; awareness of need to work with spouse to change pattern.	Early established pattern becomes maladaptive.
83.	I think both for my husband and I, our lives are stagnant.	Views their lives as stagnant.	Loss of pleasurable aspects of life.

Table 8
Thematic Clusters of Andrea's Experience

1. Manifestations of extreme stress
   (1, 9, 16, 17, 25, 61, 75)

2. Stress, overload, frustration
   (2, 3, 7, 8, 13, 19, 20, 49, 50, 51, 53, 57)

3. Management of role conflicts
   (4, 10, 12, 14, 26, 30, 32, 43, 46, 60, 66, 71, 74)

4. Loss of quality of life
   (5, 6, 47, 70, 73, 83)

5. Rationalization of impact of working
   (11, 65, 68)

6. Marital difficulties
   (15, 18, 31, 33, 34, 37, 39, 40, 41, 44, 45, 59, 72, 78, 80, 81, 82)

7. Personality patterns influenced by experiences in family of origin
   (21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 35, 36, 38, 42, 48, 76, 77, 79)

8. Work-parental role conflict and child-related guilt
   (28, 64, 67, 69)

9. Desire to decrease level of work involvement
   (52)

10. Spillover
    (54, 55, 56, 58)

11. Child/ren reacting to her working
    (62, 63)

Overall Synthesis of Andrea's Experience

Andrea experiences high levels of stress and overload as a result of the role conflict in her life. She finds that she has little time to rest during a typical day and experiences extreme exhaustion. She experiences a high level of stress at work and views her employer's expectations as being unrealistically high. She also experiences a high level of conflict with coworkers and attributes this to her employer's expectations of them. A high level of conflict with parents is also experienced in her job and she perceives them as having unrealistic expectations of her abilities. She also finds that the large amount of overtime that she is required to work is highly stressful. As a result of her exhaustion and lack of time, she finds that she speaks bluntly and directively to her spouse and expects him to respond immediately to her requests. She feels that if he does not respond immediately, she will reach a crisis point. She finds that there is little she can do to control the stress level in her life and often fears for her psychological well-being because of the overload that she experiences. Additionally, she feels frustrated by the lack of time she has to spend with her daughter in the evenings.

There are also consequences associated with the conflict that exists between Andrea's parental and work roles. She experienced inner conflict and turmoil over placing her child in a dayhome when she returned to work. Additionally, she presently experiences guilt and anxiety over the negative impact that her working has had on her daughter (e.g., her daughter is sometimes stressed, less happy, less healthy, and clingy) and the potential negative impact that it may have in the future.

Andrea finds that she presently cries more as a result of the high level of stress and overload in her life. She also finds that she is often angry and must deal with issues more quickly because of instant feelings of anger or emotional upset. Moreover, she finds that her emotions are more extreme and that she has less control over them than in the past. She has also experienced paranoid thoughts as a result of sleep deprivation and presently experiences poorer memory and periods of depression.

She is also aware of a loss of quality in her life. She and her spouse place a higher priority on spending time with their daughter and she finds that as a result, their time alone together is compromised by feelings of exhaustion. She also feels that they presently have little time for their relationship and that she has little free time for herself. Additionally, she views both herself and her spouse as somewhat unhappy and less satisfied with their marriage than in the past.

Andrea also experiences different forms of spillover. In terms of work-to-family spillover, she is sometimes expected to remain at work in the evenings and also finds that the demands of her work result in an energy deficit at home when dealing with her daughter. In terms of family-to-work spillover, she will choose not to go to work if her daughter becomes seriously ill. Additionally, she finds that the demands of her family result in an energy deficit at work. As a result of the role conflict that Andrea experiences, she also wishes to decrease her level of work involvement.

Andrea's role conflicts are exacerbated by her need to control, other-directedness, need to individuate, perfectionism, and high need to achieve. These would seem to have been influenced by her experiences within her

family of origin. She describes herself as having been a controlling person within her family of origin and feels that her experiences within that environment fostered her controlling nature. She is aware that although she would like her spouse to increase his assistance, she is unwilling to relinquish more control at the present time. She also feels that she is very controlling with her babysitter. Within her family of origin she also strove to gain her parents' approval by conforming to their expectations. Her other-directedness is evident in both her concern with coworkers' perceptions of her level of performance at work and in her experience of distress when she feels that others view her as not fulfilling her strong work ethic. In terms of her need to individuate, she views herself as independent and her working as important for the maintenance of this independence. Moreover, she feels that she is capable of coping without her spouse and expresses an unwillingness to become reliant on him, suggesting a fear of dependency. Her need to individuate is also evident in her strong need to identify with her profession and in the difficulty she experienced in being at home on a maternity leave. In terms of her high need to achieve and her perfectionism, she describes her father as having modeled a strong work ethic and professional image, which she strives to meet. When she feels that she is not fulfilling her work ethic, she experiences distress.

Difficulties within her marriage also contribute to Andrea's role conflicts. She finds that problems arise as a result of communication difficulties within her marriage. She finds that in order to achieve equitable role sharing, she must continually request her spouse's assistance. As a result, she experiences anger and frustration with him and often feels that it is easier to assume household tasks herself. Moreover, she feels that he will wait for her to request

assistance because he is aware that she will assume household tasks, thus suggesting both the self-defeating nature of her control and rescuing and passive aggression on the part of her spouse. When she does reach a point at which she needs more time for herself and must have her spouse's assistance, she finds that he is initially supportive but that this support gradually diminishes. She also experiences frustration over her spouse's inability to provide consistent emotional support. She finds that she receives an ample amount of emotional support when she is unable to cope but that she receives an inadequate amount on a day-to-day basis, suggesting a power struggle. Andrea also feels that her spouse is threatened by the greater responsibility and more professional nature of her work, suggesting a power struggle and a high achiever/low achiever dynamic within the marriage. The latter is also evident in her criticisms of her spouse's work and study habits.

Andrea attempts to deal with her role conflicts in a number of ways. She is aware of rationalizing the guilt that she experiences as a result of working. She also uses positive rationalization in that she feels that she has become a stronger person as a result of her experiences. Moreover, she views her daughter as having become very independent and sociable as a result of her dayhome experience. She also uses a number of other strategies to manage her role conflicts and these include prioritizing activities and tasks; using organizational skills; attempting to relinquish control when her spouse takes an interest in an aspect of their daughter's upbringing; becoming more flexible in dealing with forced changes in her routine; lowering her standards for the home; obtaining assistance from others outside of the immediate family; securing time for herself when at home; having a large support network (with

her parents being the most important source of support); adopting a preventative approach to her health in order to combat stress-related illnesses; spending additional time with her daughter in the morning in order to avoid rushing with her; and ensuring that her free time is spent in enjoyable activities.

Shared Experience

A total of sixteen themes emerged from the analysis of the experiences of the four coresearchers. These themes are listed in Table 9. The nine themes which were common to all of the women included personality patterns influenced by experiences in family of origin; marital difficulties; work-parental role conflict and child-related guilt; stress, overload, frustration; manifestations of extreme stress; loss of quality of life; desire to decrease level of work involvement; rationalization of impact of working; and management of role conflicts. Through follow-up contacts, the themes of spillover; child/ren reacting to her working; and avoidance of confrontations and conflict; were also found to be common to all of the coresearchers.

However, four themes were not found to be common to all coresearchers. The theme of "feelings of isolation" was not found to be part of Vicki's or Gail's experience. They cited support from key individuals outside of their immediate families as instrumental in preventing such feelings. The theme of "gender role conditioning" was also not found to be part of Vicki's or Gail's experience. They did not feel that gender role conditioning, whether their own or their spouse's, had played a significant role in their experiences of role conflict and they also felt that they did not have a traditional division of work within their marriages. The theme of "spouse reacting to her working" was not part of Andrea's experience. She related that this is likely due to the fact that she arrives home

from work before her husband and that when she is not at work, she is at home a great deal of the time. Additionally, she related that when she is required to spend additional time at work in meetings and other work-related activities, her husband is aware of these. Finally, the theme of "work-spousal role conflict" was not part of Gail's or Andrea's experience. Andrea stated that she did not experience this form of role conflict because, as mentioned earlier, she arrives home from work before her husband and is often at home during evenings and weekends. Gail related that she does not experience work-spousal role conflict because her husband understands that "business comes first" and also because he wishes to see her "get ahead" in her occupation.

The themes which are common to all of the coresearchers are further clustered into more general themes and are presented in Table 10. The numbers which appear in parentheses denote the number of the theme in Table 9. The higher order themes include stressors; early learning; the marital relationship; repercussions of work-family role conflict; and personal coping mechanisms. These higher order themes are reflected in the following overall synthesis of the experience shared by all of the coresearchers.

Table 9
All Themes For All Coresearchers

1. Personality patterns influenced by experiences in family of origin - influences originating in experiences within the family of origin, such as need to control, high need to achieve, other-directedness, need to individuate, and perfectionism

2. Marital difficulties - existence of a power struggle, spousal passive aggression, lack of communication, inequitable role sharing, or a high achiever/low achiever dynamic in the marital relationship

3. Gender role conditioning - influence of her gender role socialization on the role conflicts experienced

4. Stress, overload, frustration - frustration and a high level of stress experienced as a result of the overload of demands on her time; overload can result in feelings of reaching the limit of her ability to cope

5. Work-parental role conflict and child-related guilt - unresolvable conflict between work and parental roles and self-doubts and feelings of guilt and anxiety over impact of employment on children

6. Work-spousal role conflict - frustration or guilt experienced as a result of spouse's complaints of her lack of time for their relationship

7. Manifestations of extreme stress - physical and psychological symptoms resulting from extreme stress associated with role conflict

8. Child/ren reacting to her working - children's negative responses (i.e., stress, clinginess, resentfulness, anger, etc.) to her working and absence from home

9. Spouse reacting to her working - spouse's negative responses (i.e., marital conflict, jealousy, moodiness, complaints) to her working and absence from home

10. Spillover - energy deficit, intrusions, or mental preoccupation occurring in the family domain as a result of the work domain and vice versa

11. Loss of quality of life - lack of time alone with her spouse; lack of time for herself; loss of happiness in her life

12. Desire to decrease level of work involvement - role conflict results in a desire to decrease the number of hours worked

13. Feelings of isolation - lack of emotional support and empathy from other family members; results in feelings of isolation when unable to cope

14. Rationalization of impact of working - rationalizing impact that her working has had on her children; rationalizing guilt experienced as a result of working

15. Avoidance of confrontations and conflict - avoiding marital issues in order to avoid spousal confrontations and conflict; avoiding confrontations with children when exhausted and overloaded

16. Management of role conflicts - strategies used to decrease role conflicts

Table 10
Higher Abstraction of Clustered Shared Themes

1. Stressors	Stress, overload, frustration (4) Work-parental role conflict and child-related guilt (5)
2. Early Learning	Personality patterns influenced by experiences in family of origin (1)
3. The Marital Relationship	Marital difficulties (2)
4. Repercussions of Work-Family Role Conflict	Manifestations of extreme stress (7) Child/ren reacting to her working (8) Spillover (10) Loss of quality of life (11) Desire to decrease level of work involvement (12)
5. Personal Coping Mechanisms	Rationalization of impact of working (14) Avoidance of confrontations and conflict (15) Management of role conflicts (16)

Overall Synthesis Of Shared Experience

The woman who is experiencing work-family role conflict experiences a high level of frustration in her attempts to cope with the overload of demands made on her time. She may also feel frustrated by her lack of time for herself or others. She also experiences high levels of stress and feels that she is sometimes pushed to the limits of her ability to cope and nearing a crisis point.

The woman experiencing work-family role conflict experiences unresolvable conflict between her parental and work roles and may experience self-doubts, guilt, and anxiety over the impact that her working has had on her children and the possible impact that it may have on them in the future.

The high level of stress she experiences results in a broad range of psychological symptoms, including possessing less control over her emotions than in the past. The stress that she experiences can also result in a wide variety of physical symptoms. She also finds that there is a loss of quality in her life. More specifically, she finds that she and her spouse have little time alone together and that this time is compromised by exhaustion or conflict. She may also find that she has little time alone and that there is a loss of happiness in her life. She also experiences a wide variety of forms of both work-to-family spillover and family-to-work spillover. She also finds that her children react to her absence in a variety of adverse ways (e.g., stress, clinginess, resentfulness, anger, etc.). An additional consequence of work-family role conflict involves her desire to decrease her level of work involvement.

Influences originating in her experiences within her family of origin also contribute to the role conflict that she experiences. She possesses a need to control, which is evident in the domestic domain and may also be evident in the

work domain. She also possesses a high need to achieve, which is evident in the area of work or career. She may also display other-directedness, perfectionism, or a need to individuate. The need to individuate is associated with a strong identification with her career, viewing herself as independent, and viewing work as important for the maintenance of her independence. It is also associated with an unwillingness to be dependent on her spouse, suggesting a fear of dependency.

Difficulties within her marriage also contribute to the role conflicts that she experiences. A power struggle is present in her marriage and passive aggression is evident in her spouse's behavior. She may experience feelings of anger, frustration, and resentment over needing to continually request his assistance with household tasks in order to achieve equitable role sharing. She finds that his assistance is temporary and feels frustrated because of the overload of responsibilities she must assume. These problems are intensified by the lack of communication within the marriage. Additionally, a high achiever/low achiever dynamic is evident in their relationship, with her representing the high achiever. She views her spouse as having a lower need to achieve and may also be critical of his work habits.

She attempts to cope with her role conflicts in a number of ways. She rationalizes the impact that her working has had on her children and may view her children as having become more independent and mature as a result of her working. She may also rationalize the guilt that she experiences as a result of working. She is also aware of using avoidance as a means of coping with her role conflicts. She may avoid issues within her marriage in order to avoid

spousal confrontations and conflict. Moreover, such avoidance may occur as a result of feeling exhausted.

She also uses a variety of other strategies to manage her role conflicts. These include obtaining emotional support from others; lowering her standards for the home; prioritizing activities; using organizational skills; and being more flexible in dealing with her situation. Other strategies may include: spending more time with other family members; obtaining enough rest; taking time for herself; decreasing or limiting commitments to others or extra activities; decreasing her involvement in extra work activities; obtaining assistance from individuals outside of the immediate family; and cooperating as a couple in order to solve problems.

Discussion

In this section, the results are discussed with reference to the literature presented in Chapter One. In the case of new research findings, these will be discussed with reference to related literature. The twelve themes which were found to be common to all coresearchers will be discussed within the framework of the higher order themes outlined in Table 10. Where various dimensions of a common theme exist, these will also be addressed.

Stressors

All of the women in the study experienced work-family role conflict in the form of unresolvable conflict between their parental and work roles. The extent of this conflict is evident in the following comment by Elizabeth:

> If the children get sick, the question is: do I take the day off work to stay home with them or do I just take them to the sitter and drop them off and say: tough luck kid? . . . Then do you play the role where you say: gee, I'm not feeling well, so you take a sick leave for yourself, which is

> stretching the truth somewhat? . . . So there's a conflict there of ethics as well in many cases that shouldn't come through but they do.

This finding of work-parental role conflict is consistent with the results of a number of quantitative studies which have found that the parental role is a major contributor to women's work-family role conflict (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1982; Frone & Rice, 1987; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979; Keith & Schafer, 1980; Lewis & Cooper, 1987). Several qualitative studies have also found the parental role to be demanding and limiting for women (Heckman et al., 1977; Poloma et al., 1981). Poloma et al. (1981) stressed the high demands placed upon career-oriented women with children and the enormous difficulties this poses for them in pursuing their careers. For three of the women in the study, work-parental role conflict was also associated with self-doubts and feelings of anxiety and guilt over both the impact that their working had had on their children and its potential impact in the future.

Role overload was also common to all of the women. They experienced high levels of stress and frustration as a result of the overload of demands made on their time and consequently felt that they lacked time both for themselves and for others. Moreover, because of role overload they sometimes felt that they were pushed to the limits of their ability to cope and were very close to reaching the point of a personal crisis. For example, Vicki's description is illustrative:

> And I said: well, what cereal do you want? And they [i.e., children] all started fighting about what cereal they wanted. And I started bawling in the middle of Safeway. And that's when I went home to drop the kids off, phoned and my doctor was in and I went straight in and told him that either I was losing my mind or there was something the matter with me. Because I felt like I just was gonna break and fall into pieces. . . . But it was just like, I had been pushed to the ultimate limit.

The extent of Elizabeth's role overload at the time of the interviews is evident in the following statement:

> And, uhm, yeah, [I feel like I'm] kind of on the edge. Teetering. . . . Like right now I'm not sure if I'm gonna cry or not. And I'm sure it's like -- whoa, I'm gonna cry. It's uhm, you think about it and you think: what am I doing? It's so close to the edge. And there's no reason for me to cry but it's where I'm at. And it's just high stress. It's, I guess if you're losing it, it's like losing control. Like I'm doing now.

A number of studies have made findings of the prevalence of role overload and the lack of time experienced by working mothers (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Heckman et al., 1977; Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976). Moreover, the experiences of the women in this study are consistent with the "pressure of time" described by women (and men) in the Rapoport and Rapoport (1976) study and the lack of free time beyond work and family demands reported by subjects in the Heckman et al. (1977) study. However, the women's descriptions of approaching a crisis point is a finding which has been implied in the literature but has not been fully articulated.

Early Learning

All of the women displayed both a need to control and a high need to achieve. Moreover, these personality patterns appear to have been influenced by early experiences such as those within these women's families of origin. All four women possessed a need to control in the area of domestic responsibilities. Andrea was aware of her need to control and stated:

> . . . I am a fairly controlling person but at least I know it. At least I admit it. So I've often thought: I wish my husband would do more but I don't want to give up the control. . . . I'm not necessarily prepared yet to give up that control. And until I am, then I can't lay that on him. I can't say: you're not doing your share.

Several women also displayed this pattern in the work domain. For example, Vicki states:

> But it's really hard for me because when I do something I have to do it all the way or not at all. So that's really hard for me to give some of my -- they hired me an assistant and it's been really hard for me to give up some of my roles in my job to somebody else.

Although the need to control has been implied in the literature, it has been described using somewhat different terminology (Hood, 1983; Keith & Schafer, 1980; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976). Hood (1983) found that the majority of the women in her study were strongly invested in their family role and experienced difficulty relinquishing responsibility for domestic tasks. She referred to these women as having a strong role attachment. This is similar to the finding by Rapoport & Rapoport (1976) that members of dual-career couples experienced distress as a result of delegating intimate tasks or lowering domestic standards. That women experience worry over others' performance of domestic tasks (Keith & Schafer, 1980) would also seem to suggest a need to control.

The high need to achieve exhibited by these women has also been discussed in the literature (Beutell, 1983; Beutell & Greenhaus, 1982; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979a, 1979b; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971; Rice, 1979). Rice (1979) adds that the educational histories of individuals with a high need to achieve are typically characterized by success through intellectual ability and/or hard work and are typically accompanied by a desire for perfection. The rewards of school or work represent tangible indicators of success, whereas accomplishments in the domain of interpersonal relationships are likely to be perceived more subjectively.

A need to individuate and other-directedness were also displayed by the majority of the women in the study and appear to have been influenced by

experiences within their families of origin. The need to individuate, although conceptualized somewhat differently (e.g., as degree of intrinsic interest in work, job involvement, or need for self-expression), has also been identified in several studies (Frone & Rice, 1987; Locksley, 1980; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). Additionally, the fear of dependency on one's spouse which was associated with the need to individuate -- a pattern displayed by both of the professional women in the study -- is consistent with the finding that dual-career spouses can be reluctant to make a true commitment in their interpersonal relationships (Rice, 1979). Rice suggests that the desire to avoid experiencing personal failure in the marital relationship and the financial independence afforded by a career make dual-career spouses cautious about committing themselves.

In terms of the finding of other-directedness, Elizabeth's statement is particularly revealing:

> Looking back, I tried so hard to please him [i.e., father] and my mother. And you sort of go on trying to please people. . . . I was constantly trying to please. And I think we still try to do that. . . . and so that, yeah, you do what people think you should do. I look back on being a child and the expectations.

Moreover, the extent to which other-directedness can contribute to one's role conflicts and role overload is illustrated in Vicki's comment:

> But probably most of all, sometimes you're just too tired to do the commitments that you've made for yourself. And yet, sometimes you just don't stop making them and you just feel you're pressed to the limit.

Rice (1979) suggests that much of the behavior of the individual with a high need to achieve may be directed at receiving self-esteem enhancing accolades or "strokes" from others. He adds that the prototype of this form of behavior is in the child's performance of certain behaviors as a means of obtaining parental approval and reward. Over time, "introjected [i.e., unconsciously incorporated

into the mind] aspects of the parent's response become the basis for feelings of self-esteem" (p. 35). Thus, parental disapproval of aspects of the child's behavior can result in the introjection of negative feelings and an impairment of self-esteem. The desire to "please" or gain parental approval during childhood (and the difficulty sometimes experienced in obtaining this approval) and the existence of low self-esteem were suggested in the experiences of the women who displayed other-directedness.

The Marital Relationship

A power struggle and spousal passive aggression were evident in the marital relationships of all four women. The existence of a power struggle is suggested in the following statement by Vicki:

> I chose the fabric [for the bedroom] and he [i.e., spouse] didn't really like it because it was floral. And I said: we've always -- in all the years we've been married, we've always had what you wanted to have. This time I want to have what I want to have. So that was two years ago and he still calls the bedroom my bedroom. . . . I think maybe [there is resentment] . . . I don't think it's been easy on him trying to give up all the control.

Although power struggles are only intimated in the quantitative literature, several qualitative studies have found evidence of rivalry and competition in dual-career couples (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976) or shifts in power within marital relationships as a result of wives' employment (Hood, 1983). Rice (1979) adds that the husband in a traditional marriage generally has greater resource power (defined as the ability to control certain scarce and desirable resources such as income, which are essential for maintaining the relationship) than his spouse but that in dual-career (or dual-earner) marriages, both partners generally possess a high level of resource power. Consequently, the wife is not completely dependent upon her spouse financially. This change in the distribution of resource power alters dramatically the power dynamics in dual-earner couples, compared with traditional couples.

However, as Hood (1983) found, husbands may resent such changes in the marital relationship and respond with resentment and passive aggression (e.g., refusing to do housework on the grounds that one lacks the time and then spending more time away from home). Moreover, Hood found that tension within the marriage could continue indefinitely in the form of regulated conflict. Similarly, Gilbert (1985) found that some of the men in her study, instead of openly arguing with their wives, passively resisted performing household tasks. This form of passive aggression is evident in Gail's description:

> And even the little things and I have to each time ask if he [i.e., spouse] would mind assisting. The little things are too much [for him]. One day I said -- I had our son sitting on my lap in one of the rooms and I can't remember why he was on my lap -- I said: oh geez, I need a kleenex. Can you grab me a kleenex? It was a big job for him to have to go up to get a kleenex. Huffin' and gruffin' and he went and got kleenex and brought the whole damn box back and threw it on the -- why don't you leave a box sitting here? I mean, it was so minor and yet so big.

Three of the women also experienced anger, frustration, and resentment toward their spouses as a result of needing to continually request their assistance with domestic tasks. They felt frustrated in their attempts to achieve more equitable role sharing and found that their spouses' assistance was temporary, resulting in role overload. This inequity in role sharing has been well documented in both the quantitative (Belsky et al., 1983; Condran & Bode, 1982; Coverman & Sheley, 1986; Googins & Burden, 1987; Kingston & Nock, 1985; Lewis & Cooper, 1987; Nickols & Metzen, 1982; Pleck, 1977, 1985; Rachlin, 1987; Scanzoni & Fox, 1980; Sekaran, 1985) and qualitative literature (Heckman et al., 1977; Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969; Yogev, 1981).

A lack of communication was also evident in all four marriages, a finding which is consistent with those of several studies (Hood, 1983; Safilios-Rothschild & Dijkers, 1978) and the clinical work of Rice (1979). Kater (1985)

emphasizes the importance of enhancing communication skills for negotiating changes and transitions within the dual-earner family structure.

A high achiever/low achiever dynamic was also present in all four marriages, where the wife represented the high achiever and her spouse represented the low (or lower) achiever. For example, Gail states:

> I would definitely say that there's some tendency -- especially when I'm high and when I'm strong, which is, I would say, 80% of the time, that there is some sense of intimidation and some envy almost [on my husband's part].

Similarly, Andrea states:

> I guess that what I viewed as more of an issue [between my husband and I] is that -- and I think it was for him too more than the money [i.e., that she earned a larger salary than he did] -- is that I am more of a professional than him.

Interestingly, this high achiever/low achiever pattern is not addressed in the literature. Additionally, a number of classification systems have been devised to describe dual-career and other types of families (Hall & Hall, 1980; Hunt & Hunt, 1982; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971), yet none of these typologies provide a satisfactory category for describing the dual-earner pattern of the women in this study. The most useful category would seem to be the Type I (accomodators) pattern delineated in Hall and Hall's (1980) classification scheme, where one one partner typically possesses a high level of career involvement and a low level of home involvement, while the other partner possesses opposite priorities. However, this category is inadequate in that the women in the present study described their husbands as being low (or lower) in achievement ambition and career involvement but as *also* having a low level of home involvement (i.e., they were either resistant to increasing their level of assistance with domestic tasks or they were resentful as a result of complying).

Moreover, this category does not accurately describe these women's high level of involvement in both work and domestic domains.

Repercussions of Work-Family Role Conflict

All of the women described experiencing stress-related psychological symptoms as a result of work-family role conflict and all of them felt that they had less control over their emotions than in the past. Additionally, three of the women reported physical symptoms associated with the high level of stress in their lives. These findings are supported by those of both quantitative (Cartwright, 1978; Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; Googins & Burden, 1987; Hall, 1975; Sekaran, 1987) and qualitative studies (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976).

A loss of quality of life was also evident. These women felt that they had little time for their marital relationships and that when time was available, it was typically compromised by exhaustion or conflict. Three of the women also felt that they had little free time for themselves. Similarly, three of the women experienced a loss of happiness in their lives. Within the quantitative literature, quality of life has typically been measured in terms of the level of satisfaction with various domains. Thus, the finding of a loss of quality of life is consistent with findings of decreased life satisfaction (Googins & Burden, 1987; Holahan & Gilbert, 1979a; Sekaran, 1985; Wiley, 1987) and decreased job satisfaction (Googins & Burden, 1987; Wiley, 1987) for women experiencing work-family role conflict. Qualitative studies have also found similar evidence of decreases in quality of life (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976).

These women also found that their children, regardless of age, reacted in a variety of adverse ways to their absence. This is supported by the finding of Rapoport and Rapoport (1976) that children attempted to evoke their mothers' guilt over working. It is also consistent with Piotrkowski's (1979) finding of

interpersonal strain occurring in families as a result of tensions and role conflicts.

Spillover was also experienced and took the form of both work-to-family spillover and family-to-work spillover. Support for both work-to-family spillover (Heckman et al., 1977; Piotrkowski, 1979; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969) and family-to-work spillover (Crouter, 1984; Loerch et al., 1989) is evident in the literature.

Finally, all of the women expressed a desire to decrease their level of work involvement because of the work-family role conflict that they experienced. The desire to reduce one's work hours as a response to work-family role conflict has also been documented in the literature (Hood, 1983; Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987).

Personal Coping Mechanisms

The women in the present study used a number of different methods to cope with the role conflicts that they experienced. One of these involved the use of rationalization. All four women rationalized the impact that their working had on their children and three of the women viewed their working as having resulted in their children's development of greater independence and maturity. Elizabeth was aware of her use of rationalization in this way and said:

> So I sort of justified -- you can sort of say: hey, maybe they [i.e., children] are a little unhappy now but in the long run they become more independent; they're more self-sufficient. . . . So I -- you do a mental juggling to justify it [i.e., working] and it can work out quite well.

Three of the women also rationalized the guilt that they experienced as a result of working. For example, Andrea said:

> Well, I'm sure [I experience] some guilt [over the negative effects that my working has on my child]. I'm not a really guilt-ridden person but if there's something that gets to me -- I occasionally think: what are we doing? But then I can instantly rationalize it because I say: everyone else does it, why can't I? I don't for a minute fool myself.

Rice (1979) states that in his clinical work, rationalization is one of the means used by dual-career couples with children to reassure themselves that their children are "doing fine". He adds that for women in these relationships, rationalization may be one method of gaining reassurance that despite having both a family and a career, they have been successful in both areas. Rationalization is also implied in the use of cognitive restructuring as a coping strategy by dual-earner couples (Gilbert, 1985). This strategy involves changing one's attitude toward a conflict situation so as to modify the meaning of that situation.

Some form of avoidance was also used by all four women as a means of coping. Three of the women avoided issues within their marriages so as to avoid spousal confrontations and conflict. In several instances, the use of avoidance was motivated by feelings of exhaustion and the desire to avoid confrontations which would exacerbate an already stressful situation. The avoidance of marital conflict by these women is consistent with a similar finding by Hood (1983). It is interesting to note that dual-earner couples have also been found to have a tendency to deny marital conflict (Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971; Rice, 1979). For Vicki, avoidance of confrontations with her children was also evident:

> They [i.e., children] definitely get away with more when I'm not there. . . . Sometimes you're tired and will overlook things too because you don't want to have confrontations. So you overlook things that you know you should have said something about.

It is important to note that this form of avoidance has not been addressed in the literature.

A wide range of other strategies were also used to manage role conflicts. Strategies which were used by all four women included lowering domestic standards; using organizational/time management skills; prioritizing activities

and tasks; being more flexible in dealing with circumstances; and obtaining emotional support from others. Although all of these coping strategies have been outlined in the quantitative (Dyk, 1987; Gray, 1983; Kater, 1985) and qualitative literature (Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976), it is interesting to note that they are mainly Type II coping (personal role redefinition) strategies and do not include any strategies which could be classified as Type I coping (structural role redefinition) strategies. Strategies that were shared by either two or three of the women included spending more time with other family members; obtaining enough rest; taking time for oneself; decreasing or limiting commitments to others or extra activities; decreasing involvement in extra work activities; obtaining assistance from individuals outside of one's immediate family; and cooperating as a couple in order to find solutions to problems. These strategies are consistent with those that have been identified in a number of quantitative (Dyk, 1987; Gray, 1983; Kater, 1985; Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987) and qualitative studies (Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969, 1971, 1976). Additionally, these strategies, in contrast to those which were common to all four women, are mainly Type I coping strategies and do not include any Type II coping strategies.

It would seem, then, that the results of this study are congruent with the findings of previous quantitative and qualitative studies of work-family role conflict. From this discussion of the findings it is also evident that quantitative and qualitative approaches to research in this area cross-validate one another. In the following chapter, a more general discussion of some of the findings and their implications will be examined.

Chapter Five

General Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter begins with a more general discussion of the findings of the present research. The limitations of the study will then be discussed, followed by a consideration of the implications of the results for further research and for counseling dual-earner couples.

New Research Findings

In using the phenomenological method, the researcher's aim is to achieve greater understanding of the particular phenomenon under investigation. While all twelve themes discussed in the previous chapter have been addressed to varying degrees in the existing literature, it is the author's contention, based on his knowledge of the literature on work-family role conflict, that aspects of some of these themes have not been addressed or have only been implied or examined superficially. It should also be pointed out that the essential description of the experience of work-family role conflict for women in dual-earner couples is entirely new. A description of this kind has not been formulated previously because the phenomenological method has not been applied to the study of work-family role conflict prior to this study.

The first new finding concerns the women's experiences of role overload. As mentioned earlier, all four women described experiencing overload to the extent that they felt they were approaching a personal crisis. This aspect of role overload is only implied in the literature, as role overload has typically been conceived of as involving time and energy demands which are too great for the individual to meet (Barnett & Baruch, 1985; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Voydanoff, 1985). For example, Barnett and Baruch (1985) operationalized role overload as a subject's response to the question, "How often do the things you do add up to being just too much?" (p. 138). Moreover, findings of role overload

in qualitative studies have typically been limited to references to the excessive demands of work and family roles and the subsequent lack of time experienced by individuals (Heckman et al., 1977; Hood, 1983; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976). However, Elizabeth's feeling of being "so close to the edge", "teetering"; Vicki's feeling that she "had been pushed to the ultimate limit" and was going to "break and fall into pieces"; Gail's feeling that she was going to "crumble under the pressure" or "crumble and break"; or Andrea's feeling that she would "have a nervous breakdown" or "go crazy"; would seem to suggest an additional facet of role overload which has not previously been elaborated. Role overload, for these women, appears to have the potential to reach such proportions that it can precipitate a personal crisis or a breakdown in the individual's functioning. Thus, role overload would seem to be capable of posing a serious threat to one's psychological well-being.

Although the need to control has been implied in the literature, it has only been discussed within the context of the family domain (Hood, 1983; Keith & Schafer, 1980; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971, 1976). However, for several of the women in this study, the need to control was also evident within the work domain. The use of the term role attachment by Hood (1983) to explain the difficulties that the women in her study experienced in relinquishing responsibility for domestic tasks would seem inadequate to account for the behavior of several of the women in the present study. Hood (1983) used the term role attachment to refer to an individual's level of investment in a particular role, such that the person with a strong role attachment becomes "affectively and cognitively enamored [with the self-image provided by a particular role], desiring and expecting to see himself in terms of the enactment of the role and the self-identification emerging from this enactment" (Goffman, 1961, cited in Hood, 1983, p. 6). Although role attachment is undoubtedly an element in the

need to control displayed by the women in this study, for several of the women, their need to control pervades all roles and appears to be a general orientation toward needing to have control in various situations. Moreover, a control orientation is evident in the early experiences of several of the women. The behavior of the women in this study would therefore seem to be more adequately explained as a personality trait than a specific role attachment.

The other-directedness exhibited by the majority of the women in this study is another finding which has only been intimated in the literature. As mentioned earlier, Rice (1979) states that much of the energy that the high need achiever expends toward achieving may be directed at receiving self-esteem enhancing "strokes" or accolades from others for his or her efforts. Although achieving in order to obtain approval from others is suggested in these women's behavior, it does not seem adequate to fully explain their behavior. As the term other-directedness suggests, these women are overly concerned with others' perceptions of them and are strongly influenced by others' expectations. It is not difficult to see how the need to "please" or meet others' expectations could contribute significantly to one's experience of work-family role conflict.

Although the literature alludes to spousal passive aggression occurring in the area of domestic task performance (Gilbert, 1985; Hood, 1983), the findings of the present study suggest that it can permeate other aspects of the marriage as well. For several of the women in this study, spousal passive aggression also appeared to undermine cooperation and joint decision-making, with spouses refusing to participate in decision-making for the family or insisting on controlling their own earnings. Moreover, the findings suggest that spousal passive aggression may also be partially responsible for communication problems within the marital relationship and inadequate emotional support from one's spouse.

The combination of a high achievement-oriented wife and a low (or lower) achievement-oriented husband has not been dealt with explicitly in the literature (Hall & Hall, 1980; Handy, 1978; Hunt & Hunt, 1982; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). This dual-earner pattern, where the wife possesses both a high need to achieve and a relatively high level of involvement in her home life and her husband possesses both a low (or lower) need to achieve and a relatively low level of involvement in his home life, would appear to represent one of the least favourable scenarios in terms of the level of work-family role conflict experienced by the wife. Moreover, the problems inherent in this dual-earner pattern may be compounded by the husband's dissatisfaction or resentment over having a wife whose need to achieve exceeds his own -- a marital situation which is likely to be incompatible with his gender role socialization and self-concept.

Finally, the use of avoidance as a means of coping has been identified in the literature (Hood, 1983). However, the literature has been limited to the discussion of avoidance of marital conflict and has not addressed avoidance of conflict or confrontations with one's children. Although this form of avoidance was only used by one of the women in the study, it is important to note that for two of the women, their only child was under two years of age and the use of this form of avoidance was therefore not necessary. In terms of its consequences, avoidance of conflict with one's children is likely to result in further impairment of family functioning beyond that resulting from the avoidance of marital conflict. Moreover, the avoidance of conflict with one's children -- where the mutual avoidance of conflict common to the marital situation is likely to be absent -- may have the unintended effect of exacerbating conflicts and family management difficulties over the long term.

Limitations of the Research

In addition to discussing the new research findings, it is also important to discuss the study's limitations. The first of these limitations involves the fact that this study focused specifically on the experiences of women. It did not include an examination of the experiences of men or children. The limitation of this approach is that work-family role conflict is a complex phenomenon involving one's spouse and children as well. However, in conducting this study, the present researcher chose to sacrifice breadth in order to enhance clarity.

Second, the collection of data and their interpretation were influenced by the researcher's predispositions and biases. Although some interpretation is inevitable, the researcher has attempted to minimize such influences through a process of rigorous self-reflection. In this way, predispositions and biases can be articulated and readers made aware of the researcher's perspective (Osborne, 1990).

Third, it is possible that the coresearchers may have been influenced by the researcher's gender. They might have given different descriptions of their experiences to a female interviewer. Nevertheless, the present researcher believes that by establishing good rapport with each of the coresearchers and by using a methodology which minimizes such potentially biasing issues, that the influence of his gender on the data collection and analysis was minimized.

A final limitation involves the issue of the generalizability of the findings. Just as it may be inappropriate to generalize the findings of a particular experiment to other contexts, it may also be inappropriate to generalize the findings of this study to all women experiencing work-family role conflict. Moreover, it is also a nonrepresentative sample in that it consisted only of women who were willing to discuss their experiences of work-family role conflict. However, as mentioned earlier, phenomenological research is

concerned with empathic generalizability rather than statistical generalizability. Thus, the generalizability of this study's findings is achieved to the extent that they resonate with the experiences of other women in similar situations.

Implications for Further Research

The nature of the present study and the results which were obtained have a number of implications for future research on work-family role conflict. To begin with, phenomenological methodology constitutes a valuable approach to research in this area. Typically, natural science methodology has been used to study work-family role conflict, with the result that our understanding of the underlying processes and the ways in which these processes impact one another is limited (Piotrkowski, 1979; Piotrkowski & Repetti, 1984). Phenomenological methodology offers a complementary approach and may be valuable in providing a greater understanding of the complex interplay of psychological, structural, and cultural processes involved. It is an approach which is both systematic and rigorous; more rigorous in fact than the natural science approach because it strives to account for more of the phenomenon (Giorgi, 1971).

Future phenomenological research could also be conducted to verify or challenge the findings of the present study. Women could be included who represent other dual-earner patterns not represented in this study. For example, the experiences of women in marital relationships where both spouses possess an equally high or an equally low need to achieve or where the husband possesses a higher need to achieve, could be examined. Additionally, women representing other professional (e.g., academic, lawyer, doctor, etc.) and non-professional occupations (e.g., sales clerk, secretary, factory worker, etc.) could be studied. It should also be noted that the results obtained in this study may have been influenced by the fact that women with

either careers or jobs were included. Future phenomenological research could focus on both groups separately. The themes which emerged from the new research that has been suggested would determine the extent to which the present study has been successful in describing the essence of women's experience of work-family role conflict.

Further phenomenological research could also include spouses and children as coresearchers, thereby permitting the researcher's exposure to more of the phenomenon. By including all family members and exploring each family member's experiences of interpersonal relationships and other aspects of family life, the various ways in which work-family role conflict impacts different family members and overall family functioning could be more fully determined. In this way, a more comprehensive understanding of work-family role conflict could be obtained.

Finally, future research could place greater emphasis on the contribution of personality characteristics to the experience of work-family role conflict. The present study has identified several such personality characteristics (i.e., need to control, high need to achieve, other-directedness, and need to individuate) and their apparent origins in early life experiences. This latter finding suggests that future research also focus greater attention on women's early life experiences -- especially those within their families of origin -- as a means of gaining greater insight into the phenomenon of work-family role conflict.

Implications for Counseling Dual-Earner Couples

Although the present study was not designed to address counseling issues per se, the results do have several general implications for therapists working with dual-earner couples. First, therapists need to be aware of the extent to which stressors such as role overload can influence women's psychological (and physical) well-being. The experiences of the women in this

study suggest that role overload is capable of reaching levels that pose a serious threat to one's psychological well-being and ability to function. Therapists should therefore be aware of the full potential of stressors to impair individual functioning and also be sensitive to various signs of inadequate coping in clients.

Therapists also need to be sensitive to the issue of maladaptive personality characteristics and their potential contributions to the problems experienced by dual-earner couples. The findings of this study suggest that despite therapists' best efforts to help dual-earner couples achieve more equitable role sharing, such counseling is likely to achieve only limited success unless individual issues such as the need to control or other-directedness are dealt with first. As mentioned earlier, these personality characteristics appear to have their origins in early life experiences, particularly those within the family of origin. Therefore, after doing initial counseling with both spouses to assess the nature of the marital problems present, it would be important to address each spouse's individual issues through individual counseling. This would be necessary in order to allow each spouse the opportunity to freely express himself or herself without feeling restricted by the other spouse's presence. The focus of individual counseling sessions would be on exploring the client's early life experiences, particularly those within his or her family of origin. The therapist would help the client to become more aware of the manner in which these early experiences have influenced the development of specific maladaptive, self-defeating personality characteristics and the contribution of these personality patterns to present problems for both the individual and the marital relationship. As part of the individual therapy, the therapist might also be required to help the client begin to deal with unresolved personal issues and to heal his or her "wounded inner child" (Bradshaw, 1990).

It would also be important for therapists to be aware of the dynamics involved in marriages with a high achiever/low achiever dynamic such as that found in this study. Passive aggression on the part of the husband in this dual-earner pattern may be a partial function of his viewing himself as the "underdog" in the relationship. It would therefore be important to address issues of passive aggression during the individual counseling sessions with the husband. This would include discussion of how prior gender conditioning might play a significant role in feeling threatened by a wife's higher need to achieve.

Following the completion of the individual counseling phase of therapy, counseling sessions with both spouses would focus on bringing any underlying power struggle, competitiveness, or resentment "out into the open". This would allow both spouses to express their feelings directly and openly and allow the therapist to evaluate each spouse's feelings in terms of their legitimacy and impact on the marital relationship. Once feelings associated with a power struggle were expressed, the task of the therapist would then be one of bringing about equity in the relationship (Rice, 1979). However, before partners can work on sharing power and control, relationship elements such as trust and respect must typically be developed or restored (Rice, 1979). The respect referred to here involves a respect for the basic competence of one's partner, particularly in non-gender role stereotyped areas.

Finally, in terms of the strategies used by individuals to cope with work-family role conflict, it is important that therapists help clients become aware that the potential long term costs associated with the use of strategies such as avoidance and rationalization may offset any short term gains that are made.

Conclusion

This research grew out of the author's interest in the workplace, the family, gender role socialization, and gender issues. My emphasis in using the

phenomenological method was on understanding women's experiences of work-family role conflict rather than attempting to explain work-family role conflict. Through the use of this method, many aspects of women's experiences of work-family role conflict were revealed and hopefully a greater understanding of the phenomenon has been gained. It is also hoped that the findings of this study will stimulate further questions and research that will, in turn, provide an even greater understanding of the phenomenon.

It is also important to mention an increase in understanding of another kind. My understanding of my own values and predispositions and of the importance of being aware of these, has also grown as a result of conducting this research. It is my hope that the findings of this study will not only help men and women to gain a greater understanding of work-family role conflict but also foster greater understanding between the sexes. In this way, perhaps we can begin to move beyond "the simple question with no answer".

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Appendix A

Transcribed Interview with Gail

S: I would like to hear what your experience of dealing with your roles as paid worker, mother, and wife has been like.

G: Well, I guess one experience that really stands out strong in my mind is the expectation, I guess, it's that society - specifically family and relatives - seem to have on what the role of the mother is versus what it appears to have to be these days. For instance, the way my father and most of my uncles tend to believe things should be is that I should be at home by 5:00 or before and have dinner on the table for my husband and son, that sort of thing. And with the career that I'm currently leading, that's impossible. I just cannot do it. So, in order to try and solve that sort of conflict, my husband decided that what we would do is he would pick up dinner on the way home and I would pick up my son on the way home. And even that appears to be somewhat of a conflict because I still don't have to be home when the supper is still hot. And it seems to fall on my shoulders; that it's my fault and quite frankly, I could care less to even eat dinner as long as my son is fed. That's my main concern. And the way I see things is that my husband's a big boy and should be able to feed himself if I'm not there. But he tends to fall a little bit into the old traditional role and that certainly is, as I say, a conflict in our end. Another area that kind of stands out is that he has absolutely no responsibility when it comes to taking care of our son. I know that my responsibility is to make sure that he is picked up daily and whatever routine things are done that have to be done are done. And my husband thinks absolutely nothing of going out with his buddies after work and it generally hits on weekends. But still, in my eyes that should be family time. But he's had it in, you know, in routine sort of thing that he could go ahead and do whatever he wanted to do in his male role and in his male world. And he is fully expecting that I will carry on the homefront. And that really is playing a lot of havoc as well. We've only had our son for just over a year now and frankly I think I'm gonna crumble under the pressure if things aren't rectified and things aren't sorted out soon because - and I think the direction that I will tend to lead is towards the child in my eye that needs it the most. And that will be my son, not my husband, though he does tend to have child-like tendencies [laughter].

S: That's interesting. Could you elaborate on your statement that you feel like you're going to crumble under the pressure?

G: Well, complete frustration and a lot of times I just throw my hands up in despair at what else can I do to make things better? And in my eyes it seems to be almost a one-way street that: this is the way men do things and this is the way it's supposed to be and this is normal. And I'm supposed to fit into that niche. And I know I'm somewhat of a rebel at heart, but as a female I don't know how the ladies have ever done it. And I just- I have some personal goals that I've set and when I say crumble under the pressure what I mean is that I will - if I have to - I won't continue on with marriage because I just can't see that that is something that's worthwhile if it can't be happy. And right now it's at the point where my husband has tended to lean on another source, it seems, and that is alcohol. And I don't understand the crutch, he won't talk to me about any of his problems but he certainly does when he's under the influence with his buddies. And his buddies let me know what it is that's bothering him and then when he sobers up, I'll try and address it. And, you know, it's just one continuous circle. And the way I see it is almost like: what is it with men , do I have - you know, are they all children? And I shouldn't slot all men in that category, but frankly, I'm getting to the point where I just hope I can do a 100% better job in raising my son because if he could - I really hope that I can instill in his mind that we're all human. And I really get, quite often, the feeling and it has been since we've gone into this family-type set-up - that men have the upper hand and they really feel that that's their right, that's where they belong. And it goes right on through, right through to the workplace too that - for instance, I was stuck in a situation the other day where I've been handed a specific account to handle or to take care of. And it's a major account and it's completely mixed up and screwed up. And this is a little bias, but there were several men that had their fingers in it and it's just ended up one big mess. So I instructed that if I am to handle this account, I want it 100% and I will make the decisions and I don't want anyone interfering. I'll make the decisions and I'll indicate what we have to do to rectify the various problems. And one person - this gentleman was quite averse to the way I was taking over, but I just couldn't see any other way around it. It's either somebody admit it, somebody take the whole thing and rectify it - and by admit I mean admit that it's their account; and really control it - or we're gonna lose the account. And so I thought: nobody else is volunteering, I might as well say I'll do it but I want to do it my way. And they were quite upset by it. They know right now that I'm in the circumstances where at times I'm having to transport my son from Edmonton to St. Albert for daycare and then get back into Edmonton for work. And this one gentleman that seems somewhat averse to my taking over the account, come up to me and said: let's pull everyone that's been together - everyone that's been involved on this account - pull them all together, we'll go right through and hash everything out and get it all on the table and we'll know exactly where we stand with the account. And he said: fine, if that's what you think that has to be done; 7:30 tomorrow morning. Which meant that I had to be up at 4:30 and then an hour to get myself ready and get

my son ready, get him fed his breakfast, get him out to St. Albert, turn around and get back into Edmonton for a 7:30 meeting. But I did it, you know, and just to prove a point. Yet I know if it was a guy in that instance, he would have turned around and sent his wife out to do the child running around. And I'm not in that position. I cannot get my husband to do that sort of thing. He feels it's my place. And yet who's gonna feel the brunt of it? My son. And you end up with a lot of circumstances where you're tossed around like a rubber ball. You could stand your ground but then with men having the upper role and being the decision-makers - had I objected to that meeting, #1 they would've felt that, fine, my heart's not in it and I probably wouldn't have been assigned the account. But I want the account to prove that I can do it. And if I were to insist that my husband take over the reponsibility of getting Matt out, then I would've had rumbling in the homefront and I don't need that either. So you just end up with this circle where what you do is run around like a chicken with it's - you know, just trying to keep ends together. And really being successful at just about nothing. But it's one heck of a struggle and like I say, I've only had a year of practice so far and I'm hoping things will get better as time goes on. But you really do wonder how it'll get better, when it'll get better and is it worth it?

S: Would you say then, that the frustration that you described earlier is related to a lack of communication?

G: Uh, possibly communication. Well definitely like where he feels that certain instances he has to go to his buddies, sort of thing, where I can't be spoken with. I would say there is communication lacking there. I spoke to someone else about this a little earlier today and they indicated that perhaps where the problem is is that I have myself sent out mixed messages where I've allowed certain things but not allowed other things. And - well, for instance, if we go out to a party together and my husband drinks, I don't get upset. I bring him home, everything is fine. If he goes out to the party on his own and he gets real drunk and can't drive, well, I get mad and I tell him to take a cab home. I don't wake up my son to go pick him up, so it's mixed messages. And this person sort of recommended that perhaps what I should do is say we both go out to the party together, we don't drink. Which is perfectly fine in my end but I don't know how my husband would handle it. And there at the same time it's sort of going along with what I believe when he's out partying on his own. You know, that he finds his own way home and makes sure that it's a safe one, sort of thing. Perhaps, yeah, communication is where there's a lack. I guess, as well, that could hit home with work too in that I'm sort of prereading what I expect the seniors, which are the men in the company are going to - how they're gonna react and what are they gonna say, instead of waiting to find out and handling it that way. But I don't know, it's really kind of hard to judge when it's your livelihood and it's your career that you're

playing with. It's not something that you can - if I didn't care for my job I'd definitely take the risk but you know, when you're wanting everything to be right - home and child rearing and your work place, your career - you want it all to be right. I myself anyway tend to try and minimize the risks that are involved with hurting or ruining any of those areas. And for me I found that the easiest way to do it is trying to bear it myself. But I don't know how long that's gonna last either so.

S: So then, when you spoke about frustration, what things were you referring to?

G: Well, I guess we're - I found myself constantly put into the situation where I just throw my hands in the air and say: phh, I'll do it myself. And though you don't have the time and you don't have the space to be able to do that, you're taking it on anyway. If that makes any sense. And it's really frustrating that you can't rely on somebody else to help you out with the load, sort of thing [tearful].

S: You talked about your husband being somewhat traditional. Was that evident before your son was born?

G: It became more apparent after our son was born because prior to that - I have sort of a mothering instinct to begin with, where if I can do it I will do it and I'm really willing to go along with it. But when our son came into the picture I had to lend a heck of a lot more of that tendency towards him and I didn't have as much available to give to my husband. And my husband is the baby of the family and he moved away from home when he was very young. He was drinking since he was 14 years old and quite excessively. And I guess I kind of thought it would all disappear, which is ridiculous. But I know that when our son came into the picture it sort of compounded things because my husband then had to become a provider with me - that he has to help out with what's going on. And I don't know if he's quite prepared to do that. I mean, it was really overwhelming. I was prepared for having our son but I didn't - with him being my first child, I had no idea what all is involved with rearing a child. And it really was overwhelming at first but - and I guess if that's the way my husband's seeing it as well, maybe it's just hitting him now, I don't know. But he's certainly - you know, sort of, it just all gelled together once our son was into the picture.

S: You talked earlier about getting feedback from his friends about the things that were bothering him. It seems that you try to foster communication.

G: Yeah. Well, I guess I've been raised with alcoholism in various areas within my family - not my own immediate family but different relatives and stuff. And so you sort of - and one of which is a very close aunt of mine - is like a best friend, sort of thing. And I sort of ended up being able to have empathy, I guess, for why it is they find that - what I term "the bottle" - to be an answer for them. Why do they tend to lean? And about a year or so I'd say, after we were married, I found this tendency where my husband would sort of go towards the bottle. And at that time I had to quit the career that I'm in now. I had quit it because he was very uncomfortable with my having to be out on luncheons and meeting with the male gender. And he just was very uncomfortable with that and asked me if I'd step back and go into an administrative position. And I did. It was perfectly fine with me. But I did in the expectation that he would carry the majority of the financial load. And as it's turning out now, in order to meet some of our goals within the next 5 years - which is sort of a deadline that I've set - that I have to get out there and find some way of meeting the financial necessities, sort of thing. I found at that time he was starting to go out partying with his buddies more and more and more often. So it was at that time that I - after questioning him wasn't getting any answers - started going to our friends and finding out, you know: is there a problem? And sure enough, they were coming back to me with various things that: I'm unemotional and that I'm unaffectionate and on and on [tearful]. And I sort of indicated to my husband at that time that he was going to be in trouble because by the time I sort of put everything together, I was pregnant. And that he was gonna have one heck of a time tolerating and being able to accept the changes that were gonna have to happen because there would be a new baby brought into the picture. And he seemed to feel that everything would be fine; everything would sort out okay. But they definitely haven't, you know, which I had more or less expected. They definitely - as overwhelming as they were to me, they are certainly are even magnified for my husband. So, yeah, it's tough. Like I say, I've tried and tried to bring it out but I don't know, perhaps I was just too much. I'm the strong one in the family. I'm the pillar, I guess, and he just goes along with anything I say. Anything in as far as what we have and where we're going and what we're doing with it. It's always been my decision but now that I've ended up in more of a demanding role, #1 of my career as well as mother, I've had to lean on him more and more. And I'm not sure whether he's ready to accept that sort of thing but I've talked to several people that are in the same sort of situation, especially with the first child and especially when the first child is later on in life, where you sort of get your routine set ways the older you get. And we certainly had our set ways that sort of went rocky. And we have to get things smoothed back out again. I don't know.

S: You mentioned about giving up your job because your husband had asked you to. Could you elaborate on some of the changes that have occurred in your career?

G: Well, initially I started out in the industry I'm in now - when I say initially I mean that's when I met my husband, sort of thing. I was in this industry and I worked myself from a receptionist's position into outside sales. And was thoroughly enjoying it and it really was a part of my personality. I really found it a lot of fun and it was - I'm rather outgoing and it just kept the spice in things. And I think that's one of the things that he really liked in me when he met me. And then when - we got engaged just very shortly - a couple months after we met. And that's when he indicated to me that he really wasn't comfortable with my being in more or less what he termed as free - how did he put it? I can't remember how he put it but it was something free, which sort of indicated that he felt I had much more freedom than he could see a female role should be. We talked about it and he suggested that he preferred if I looked for work - the company I was working for was a little bit wavy anyway - if I looked for work would I consider going back into administration as opposed to continuing on in an outside sales-type set-up. And it really made no difference to me. It really made absolutely no difference. The only restricting factor, I guess, that I didn't enjoy was the fact that the position that I ended up accepting - I was still meeting lots of people, I was working in the industry and so I was meeting lots of people and it was still a lot of fun but I couldn't make the money I'm making, you know. And I had absolutely no control over, you know, like you do with a sales position. And so that's when I ended up pregnant and layed off for a short period there, I told him that I was really considering getting back into sales. I like the flexibility. I like the freedom. I wanted to be able to come and go now that I have a child. I want to be able to control my time more instead of having like an 8 to 5 restricted-type position where you'd have to be there. And I also wanted more control over my income because if there was another one to come along, I don't want to have to work. In my opinion, it's not fair to the children and especially when there's more than one. So he agreed with me that that was the route to go. But it's only been a short year that I've been back into this career mode and that, together with our son, is just overwhelming for him. Such that he felt it was necessary to go for counselling to try and sort things out and see if there's a problem that can be corrected.

S: When you say overwhelming for your husband, can you elaborate on that?

G: Well, I guess it's silly little nitty gritty things that I've always been there to do. And the dinner being one and needing help around the house now on weekends when the housework has to be done. And needing some assistance with: you take this half of the bills, I'll take this half and we'll both take care of it. Needing some assistance with our son and when it comes to getting him ready or bathing him or to feeding him. There's only so much time in a day and you can

only stretch yourself so far. And even the little things and I have to each time ask if he'd mind assisting. The little things are too much. One day I said - I had our son sitting on my lap in one of the rooms and I can't remember why he was on my lap - I said: oh geez, I need a kleenex. Can you grab me a kleenex? It was a big job for him to have to go up to get a kleenex. Huffin' and gruffin' and he went and got kleenex and brought the whole damn box back and threw it on the - why don't you leave a box sitting here? I mean, it was so minor and yet so big. But so I just, what the heck, I'll start doing it myself. And I don't think that's the right attitude either. I don't think that any one person should have to take on the whole load when there's another adult involved in the picture. But hopefully we'll get that sort of thing all sorted out.

S: How would you describe the division of household and childcare responsibilities then?

G: Well, it's certainly one of the areas we're addressing right now. But up to now, it's my responsibility except that my husband will do what he feels like doing, when he feels like doing it. You know, if he feels like doing the laundry, he'll do the laundry. If he feels like dusting, he'll dust. But it's certainly not something I can rely on to be a continuous thing. And it's certainly not a divided task or anything like that. As well with, I mean, the financial decisions, he'll come to me: can we afford this? Can we have this? And then he'll turn around and - for instance, we had to go out and just had to go out and buy a $1200 television set a year ago. I hate to restrict him because it is his income that's coming into the household as well and if he were single - and I shouldn't have this mentality but I keep thinking that if he were single he'd do it for himself. So he has to be able to do it for himself now. And I mean, a $300 television set would do everything that the functions we use in this $1200 set does but we just had to. And it's sort of his way of maintaining control. And then he went out last year and bought a $24,000 car. We really didn't need it: we had 2 good running cars that were sporty and not so familyish but I didn't say anything. I just - you know, taken on the added debt and we've reorganized a few things. And then at the same time he feels I shouldn't have that right to tell him what he can or cannot spend, though I don't stop him from spending whatever he wants to spend. I shouldn't have that right and yet he doesn't want to take on any of the assistance, you know. So it's - in our family it's certainly not a well-divided thing but we're addressing that and hoping to get that rectified very soon. Because as the woman in the household I don't see how any female can handle taking on full time work, full time mother, as well as full time wife. You have to divide it all up and have assistance and work as a group. I don't see any way around it.

S: When you talked about him purchasing the television, you mentioned that it was his way of maintaining control. Could you elaborate on that?

G: Well, it's kind of a couple of different areas but the vehicle, for instance, was - he was trying to prove to himself and I guess to us - that he was father and husband and taking on that appearance or that, you know. And getting a family car was his way of doing that. Well, like I say, I really didn't feel that it was a necessity item and I could have seen putting that money toward something far more constructive but I don't want to control his money. And when I say his money it's because it's his paycheck as well. When it comes to getting him to assist with the financial end of things so that he can make decisions and know what's there and I'm not telling him yes, no, or maybe so, he doesn't want the responsibility because he's afraid of not doing it properly. He's afraid that it won't - he won't be able to - he uses quite explicit language when he comes out with it. Terminology like: fine, give it to me, I'll blank it up, is the way he puts it. And he just doesn't want to take on the responsibility. And yet he has to. And just the way things are now, he certainly has to because I don't have time for it all.

S: What would you estimate your share of the household work and child care to be?

G: Well, I have to kind of break it down because when it comes to taking care of the house, he's excellent. He takes care of the yard and that sort of thing and when I haven't had time to do something he will get to it but it's on his own time. So he really is excellent and I would say it's probably a 50/50 split there eventually. Taking care of the books, I'm 100% responsible and taking care of our son I'm 100% responsible. Like he'll do, you know, odds and ends that I ask him to, complaining quite all the way through. But as far as the responsibility end of things goes, that's my baby.

S: So then, overall, if you looked at the whole picture, would you say that the sharing is unequal, with you doing the greater share?

G: Yeah, I would say it is. I would really, really - I pity any other females in this role - but I would really like to see a 50/50 split throughout. It would be really nice. And I guess that's what we modern-day women are striving for, striving to see eventually. But hopefully my son will see it.

S: How do you feel about placing your son in daycare while you go to work?

G: Well, I've got it really good. I don't leave him in daycare, I leave him with a family member. So I have absolutely no worries and he gets dropped off in the morning. I don't have to phone. I don't have to do anything. They will contact me. They have the emergency - I have no worries

whatsoever. And that might be changing very shortly but hopefully he'll be able to talk and fend for himself and let me know what happens. But I would never, ever even consider a daycare or any other arrangements. Never.

S: How do you feel about not being around your son during the day?

G: I'm fine. And I think it's because I know that he's mine every night. He's mine. And on weekends I do whatever I can to be with him and I know that the time I'm spending with him is valuable time and it's his time. And I think if I had to be forced into a situation where I was there as mother only, sort of thing, I would probably be able to give him such as good time - if I'm making any sense - as I can because I'm sort of fulfilled in my own right. No, I don't feel any obligation or any discomfort whatsoever. I did at first but that's natural mother instinct and I know he's well cared for.

S: How does your husband feel about you working full time now that there is a child?

G: I think if he had his druthers I wouldn't be. I think he'd really like to see me at home but he realizes that he can't make ends meet on his own. And I've even offered that as a solution - that was prior to my getting into the career I'm in right now. But before I made any major decisions I offered us a solution. We could sell the house and sell one of the cars and go into something much more within his - because he makes really good money. It's just not enough to meet the commitments we have now. And he said: no way. There was no way he was giving up what we have and it was worth the sacrifice for a few years.

S: Could you describe your job in more detail?

G: I'm involved in outside sales and there's a lot of demand on my time because it's a sales position that involves a lot of leg work, a lot of pricing and that sort of thing. I find that I have to use a lot of my evening hours preparing and getting things ready. A presentation within the next couple of days which you pull into the office and you get the secretary to start processing all your deliverings and more the next day. And the ultimate goal is to be able to be out building business every day and you do your legwork at night. And then mixed in there somewhere is making the sale as well. So it's quite a demanding position and it actually has been more of a male position throughout the industry. So it's kind of a male world that has to be a little bit readjusted so that it allows the female - actually most of them in the industry are about my age. They have very young children and they're in pretty much the same situation as I'm in right now.

So we just have to sort of get the industry retrained a little as to what can be expected of us because we do have something outside of work to keep us living, you know. Yeah, it's a demanding job. But it's fun.

S: How would you describe your relationships with other people at work?

G: I would say it's good. I was temporarily laid off there and apparently a lot of the people in the industry, as well as in the company I was working with, went to bat for me and with the management and really kicked up a storm and what were they trying to prove. So I think that, you know, the rapport and the concern was there, especially the way they felt for me, it seems. I try to treat everybody as an equal. Like I just look past them and see that we're all human. And that's what I try to deal with is that we're all human and ignore the fact that this person wears some fancy suit and this person wears jeans. I like to try and just read the person for the person. And I mean, there's certainly times when personality conflicts are there and you just can't overcome them but the majority of the time I think it works out really well. And I get a lot of support from my peers and as well, I would hope that I'm there to give them support when they need it too.

S: Have you had any similar experiences at work to the one that you described earlier involving the conflict over the account?

G: Not really. But actually this other person is appearing to have that same power struggle with everyone. And apparently it has something to do with his status or position within the company and in that there is some kind of a fine line and he probably feels somewhat [in]secure - I mean, I get along with him quite fine. It was in this case just that one incident that seemed to rub him the wrong way and before and since that incident, outside of that it's fine: hi Gail, how you doing-type attitude. He's perfectly fine. That's one good thing about that person is that they sort of keep business as business and that incident was that incident, though it put me in a spot for a brief period of time. It was forgotten that fast too, so.

S: Have you had any experiences of family interfering with work?

G: Actually, quite often. You're really stuck between a rock and a hard place when you have to make decisions between a sick child and an account closing tomorrow. It's really hard to - if I'm not in a situation or position where I can right then and there put them on hold - for instance, if I'm in a board room meeting and I'm called out to attend to a phone call and it's my sick child, I'll

go tell them: I've gotta go this and that and I'm fine. But my after hours work I find really ends up being knocked aside all the time because of either my son's sick or my husband's mad or something that you're supposed to attend to as the lady of the house, sort of thing. For instance, last night my son absolutely refused to go down. He just decided that he wanted to be up. So by the time he did go down it was about 10:45 and I had 3 major orders that I had to get written to be faxxed first thing this morning. So I was up till about 1:30 trying to get those things written out and then this morning when I did go in I had a 9:00 appointment and I was gone from 9:00 on today. I thought: well, just before I fax that I want to make sure I hadn't missed anything. And sure enough, here's a few things here and there that because of the late hours at night and you've got other things on your mind with the family, that I had missed or that I have to double check on. So it's still sitting on my desk waiting to go out and it was supposed to be faxxed this morning. So then I have to turn around and get back there and get that out before 5:30. So it's just - and it all started because my son decided he just didn't feel like sleeping last night.

S: How about the other situation in which work interferes with your time at home?

G: Well, I haven't really come to that yet because my work is too new. And for right now, my son is definitely priority and then my relationship, my family is next in line and then my work. But my work doesn't interfere, if that makes any sense. Like, it's something that has to be done and it just doesn't interfere for me. The way I see it was brought up, we need this and that to get to where we want to be and everything else seems to interfere with me getting there. My work at this point doesn't seem to interfere with - I guess probably because it's such a flexible type of position. And if I have to go into my client's office with egg all over my face and say: oops, sorry, it's not done, I'll have it tomorrow, I will. Whereas at home you can't, it's not really flexible. I won't stick my son in his crib and let him bellow until he falls asleep, sort of thing. It's not me, so that's not something I can reschedule.

S: Earlier you talked about your husband's sex-role attitudes. Could you tell me about your own attitudes?

G: Well, I would say that I'm probably somewhat old-fashioned if I could be. But I don't really have that luxury in life so it's okay not to be. I would just love to be able to stay home and nurture and care for the family like they did way back when. I would love to be able to dedicate 100%, though I don't think - I'm really sure that I would be giving up a lot of myself. I would still think it would be a worthwhile trade for the reward you'd get in the end with having done a good job,

sort of thing. But unfortunately, we're not provided those luxuries so I do have to work. I won't be happy with myself and hopefully the time that I can put towards it will be worthwhile and I'll try to keep whatever traditional roles and traditional values I can get into that time. I will try and keep them there.

S: So then, how important is career to you?

G: Quite.

S: So then, if you were able to be at home with your children, how would you feel about not being able to work and pursue your career?

G: Well, I've kind of been - I would really have a biased opinion on that one because I've had a taste of it - of the career. I know I would've accepted and gone along with the other if I had to, as far as staying home and being mother and being a good wife and that sort of attitude. I would've done it if I had to and having then not tasted what I know is out there, I probably would have been perfectly fine with it. But now that I've had a taste of both and if I had to make a choice, ultimately I would like to have some sort of happy medium between - I would really like to be the best I can be for myself but at the same time I want to be able to provide the best I can for my son as mother too.

S: Could you tell me about your family of origin and your relationship with your parents and siblings?

G: I'm really close to my family. Both my mom and dad are in their fifties. And I'm in my early 30's, so that brings us really close in age, sort of thing. We have a lot in common. I have a sister and 3 brothers and we were all born within 5 years, so we're really close as well. And my husband, on the other hand, is from a large family but they're all the way over in Nova Scotia. So he has no immediate family, no relatives, no cousins, no nothing here. And so my family is somewhat his family. We were brought up in quite a traditional-type role. My father is very, very traditional, I guess. Extremely old-fashioned and we give him a hard time about it and he's softening up in his old age. But he's getting a little easier on my ma. But my mom is the very catering, motherly type that's always doing what dad tells her to do. And she rebelled there a little bit - she had a nervous breakdown when the 5 of us kids had one by one - like one year after the other - left home. And starting with me we went right down the line and within 5 years she had a nervous breakdown because she felt useless. And she ended up - I'm not sure whether it was medical

advice or counselling or what all was involved but she ended up going to work to feel human again. And she worked for about probably 6 years and has recently over the last couple of years ended up leaving her job. And my father is close to retiring and so they'll both be home, sort of thing. But up until then my father had forbidden her to work. She was not allowed to work because he was the provider and he did not want her embarrassing him by making it appear to his peers that she had to work in order for them to survive. Because it certainly wasn't the circumstances but the way he saw things, it was. So until she finally got a chance to go out - it was either that or their marriage was going to break up because for her sanity reasons she just couldn't stay at home waiting for him to come home every day when there was nobody there in her eyes to prepare for. So it certainly worked out well for her in the long run and as well for my father. And like I say, they'll be off and about and travelling over the next few years. And they're there for excellent support. My father is a little bit old-fashioned in his guidance tendency. My mother is quite the opposite. She likes to try and be as open as she can. And so you get some mixed kind of opinions in different circumstances. They've tried their best at being able to put in their advice as far as my role setup because I had been married once before and when that marriage didn't work - there was no children involved - things just dissolved and everything was perfectly fine. And then it was a big step for me to have agreed to being married again. And they really - everybody had sort of resolved to the idea that I would not get married again. I had my other ideas of life and it was quite a shock for everybody when I did end up getting married again. And now with all these problems coming down, nobody's really shocked by that at all [laughter]. And my dad, of course, gives the very strict bits of advice in that: Gail, well, don't be so stubborn, don't be so pig headed, don't be so dominating. And my mother's saying: Gail, keep up with it [laughter]; be as dominating as you have to be, you've got a say in this too.

S: How would you describe your relationship with your mother and father when you were growing up at home?

G: My mother, I would say it was generally pretty good. I went through the teenage areas where you felt that you knew more than they did and on a couple of occasions ended up with some pretty serious interactions, I guess, with my father. Because with him being the person that we usually had to ask permission of, and him being very strong willed and: no and no is the answer. And no reasoning behind it. We had a few run-ins there but they usually got smoothed out. I kind of felt sorry for my mother in the role that she was having to play. Like you'd hear her say so many times - by so many times I mean at least a few times a year - she would be saying: I'm not the maid around here, type attitude. And I swore I'd never have that attitude and sure

enough, I get that feeling: what am I here for? I'm not the maid, you know. But generally, it was a pretty good relationship.

S: How about your relationship with your brothers and sisters?

G: I was kind of the - I had to break the ice on everything. I was the big sister and everybody looked up to me and either they were leaning on me to get the approval - get whatever ice broken with mom and dad - or they were jealous and envious of me because I got this and they didn't. Because once the ice was broken, mom and dad always say: oops, you're not doing that. But it was generally pretty good. Right now I've got 100% support from every one of them. They're really - it's like they had to go through their eras too, sort of thing. And they can really empathize with what I'm going through right now. And I'm actually behind all of them. I was the oldest in the family but they all have children. They have all been married for several years except for my youngest brother. But he has a couple children but he's not married or anything. But they all have a good idea of what it is I'm trying to achieve and what I'm - so like I say, they're really supportive.

S: What expectations are there of you in your work role?

G: I would imagine - I mean, they haven't come right out and told me what their expectations are - they've told me what they think I'm capable of, in that I could be the best, sort of attitude. But they haven't told me that's what I have to be in order to be there. I think they just expect that I'll give it my, you know, 150% effort, my best shot forward. And that's all they're asking of me, I would think.

S: Are they quite understanding when there are interferences at work that are family-related?

G: I would say they are. It's been somewhat abused in the past, I'd say, by previous employees and some current employees. They're extremely tolerant from what I've seen other employers of mine. When I compare what this company will tolerate, I think it's somewhat ridiculous but I think they have faith that I won't abuse the system. And I mean, that's not what I'm there for. I'm not there for a paycheck. I wanna be successful. So I think they realize that in me.

S: If you think back on the last year since your son was born, what sort of consequences have there been for your physical well-being?

G: Well, one good thing I'm losing weight [laughter]. Losing weight constantly. I would say it plays havoc on your nervous system. My memory is certainly not what it can be and has been. I just - like, I think your body has to give somewhere. And for me I would say it's having somewhat of an emotional toll. I tend to not be able to control my emotions like I want to be able to and like I certainly was able to at one time. If I even so much as think sadness I'm feeling sadness, whereas before I had full control of that. And I think it's just a way of venting. I think it's just what my body is tending to - you know, even right now I can feel myself getting all jittery and mushy over something there's absolutely no reason to be. And it's just a sort of a nervous reaction. At one time there about 6 months ago I actually went to the doctor to find out if there was a problem because I would get into new situations - and in this job you're constantly in new situations - but even so much as walking into someone's office and I'd get this uncontrollable shaking. Like I just could not control it. And there's an uncle of mine that has some sort of a disease. I can't think what it is right now but it is a nervous condition where he shakes. And I thought maybe that was coming through to me or something. But they said no, that it was sort of a result of an older pregnancy and that there's a very, very small percentage of women that go through it. And that it's just something that can be controlled by rest and ease of mind, sort of thing. And that the more under stress I am, the more you'll see it. And sure enough, so - I've tried to ensure that I get my full 8 hours rest and I don't let things bother me or if they do I handle them. And there has certainly been a turnaround on it but yeah, just, you know, the whole system seems to give out and the mind is still there.

S: Is there anything else physically that you've noticed?

G: No I don't think so. Initially I'd be tired all the time but I'm not anymore. I found that I've just grown into, like: this is the norm. And I don't think that there's anything really physically.

S: You touched on emotional well-being earlier. What kinds of emotions have you experienced?

G: Well, just frustration. But like I say, when something touches me that's the slightest, slightest bit sad, I'm really upset. I mean, I can hear a report on the radio and I'm upset. About somebody I don't even know anything about. So my emotions are definitely screwy. Like, there's certainly something wrong there but hopefully that'll all get sorted out. I don't seem to find sort of that happy medium where you can look forward to something happy. It just doesn't seem to be there. It's just more work, if that makes any sense. Like even so much as a family reunion or having someone to dinner. It's just more work. You know, it's not a happy occasion. It's not good like it used to be.

S: So you find that you can't look forward to things?

G: Oh no. I just take things in stride. Like when they're meant to be they'll be there. Mind you, I think - as we initially started talking about - I think that maybe my husband's drinking has something to do with that and I'm hoping that when we can even get a handle on that and things sort out that way, it will sort of take away - it'll make things better. Because at this point I know everything's gonna end up in a drunk and I'll be dragging this lush home. And I know the next day is just gonna be a laze-around-the-day, you know, couch potato-type attitude. And it's just not worth it. So I'm hoping that that's what it is but I certainly - like I say, I don't look forward to a whole heck of a lot.

S: Do you find that fewer things these days make you happy?

G: When it comes to occasions and that sort of thing, yeah. There's only one thing that makes me really happy and that's my son [tearful].

S: Could you describe to me how much free time you have now as compared to before your son was born?

G: Well, before he came on the scene I was pretty much in control of what I wanted to do with my time. And my husband did his thing and every now and then we hoped that we'd have a few things we did together, sort of thing. And it was a lot of fun. Like we sort of kept the bubble there. But I'm finding now that I sort of have to preorganize things in advance to be ready for them. And I mean, you can't just get up on a Saturday morning and go shopping anymore because you don't know what mood my son's going to be in or what's gonna be involved. And whether you're gonna stay for lunch: do you pack a lunch? Do you, you know. So I've been trying to sort of prearrange any things that we like to do together. And anything that I'd like to do doesn't seem too important because usually something comes up that screws it up anyway. There's not a whole lot of things I do. Like right now I really enjoy suntanning in those tan beds that everyone taboos. But I look at it as sort of a sanity break. It gives me a half hour break a couple times a week. And I'll do my utmost to be able to get to that tan booth. And it's like 6 blocks from my house and it's a 2 minute jaunt and I can be there, tan, and be back within a half an hour. And that even inconveniences either me or my husband. And my husband's not gonna be there and he'll decide when he is or isn't going to be. Then I have to find a sitter and then get my son over to the sitter. And all for a 20 minute/half an hour break. It hardly seems

worthwhile. So I find that a lot of the times whatever I liked to do or would like to do is just secondary, so I don't worry about it. I know that with time things will change - like I really enjoy music, I love walking through the parks. I love that sort of thing and I know that it's only a matter of months and my son will come with me. And then I'll be doing it all again and it's worth it. I mean, time flies so darn fast anyway, so it's well worth it. But until they're past the toddler stage it's a lot of work. And it's a lot of preparing and just to get there and find out he's teething or something and it screws it up anyway, so you have to head home. I'd just rather wait my time out and like I say, it's just a matter of months and everything I think, as far as I'm concerned, will be back on track. And the way I'm planning is that we'll be back on track for me and my son and if my husband can sort things out and be there with us, that would be perfect. But if he can't, then I've gotta fend for us right now.

S: Could you tell me about the methods you use to cope with role conflict?

G: Well, I think - as you probably gathered - one of them would be definitely to fend for myself and my son, which I consider part of myself. And that is to block out whatever wants to interfere, sort of thing. If it's not positive, it's not part of our life. And in hope that would keep me more positive. I mean, so many times you just wanna say: uh, life's a bitch and then you die. And you shouldn't have that attitude because that's certainly the way it'll be. And so, like I say, I just block out and temporarily, hopefully - right now my husband's one of those things that are just very negative and very, you know, pulling us right down. And I see absolutely no reason for it and until he can decide where he wants to be I won't be there to support him. And we can try and get things going in the right direction and hopefully together, but if I have to do it on my own, I'll do it on my own. I think as well I look for support from a lot of my friends and family. Like they're - the majority of my friends and all my family have been there right through with me being single, married, single and whatever else in between and the various work roles that I've had and now family. And so they're really, really good leaning posts and if I have to I'll go and do my griping and my sobbing or whatever I want, on their shoulders. So it certainly helps me cope. I guess those are pretty much - I either push it away or I try and deal with it right there with a friend. You know, talk it out, get it out of my mind, and I continue on.

S: You mentioned also about trying to predict certain tasks in advance. Could you tell me a bit more about that?

G: Yeah, organization is certainly, I think, a prerequisite of having kids. You just can't - of having babies I would say, because I've had several - all my family has had their children and so they're

aged from 12 years old on down and they've always stayed with auntie Gail and they've always been right there for me. Any time I wanted kids around - because I've always been close with children. And so I know that there's not a whole lot of work involved with children but when you're talking babies, you certainly have to plan in advance. I mean, you don't just get up and go. You have to make sure that you've got the diapers and the jams and the bottles and the food and whatever else and you're in between this nap and that nap and that whatever you're bringing the child in, there's room enough to carry whatever luggage you're carrying back. Yeah, there's certainly preplanning. It's just not a get up and go-type attitude. That, I think, in later years you sort of - it becomes the norm. You just do what you feel like doing-type attitude. And that's pretty much it [laughter].

S: Have you found that your standards for household work have changed since your son arrived?

G: Oh, definitely. I used to be somewhat meticulous. My husband was very meticulous. Everything had to be just so. And everything - we were ready for anyone who pops in at any time. We were presentable. And now, nothing is important to me anymore, as far as how people take us. They have to take us as we are or they're not the right people anyway, is my attitude. And I mean, if my son's toys are laying around, his toys are laying around. I pick them up as often as I can and I don't have them laying there in the evening if he's already in bed. But as long as he's up and he wants his toys, he's - you know, or if I don't have time to do the lunch dishes right after because we're gonna read a book instead, I will. And so, yeah, I've definitely slacked off on it. I try to keep the image, sort of thing if we have a planned dinner party or whatever it is, but if it's not planned, they just have to take us as we are [laughter], which sometimes can be lots of fun.

S: How do you feel about those standards not being at the level they were before?

G: Uh, it doesn't bother me in the least. I actually don't think it - it was probably a headache before and now it's not a headache. I've got a reason not to worry, is sort of the attitude I take. There's just so much time in a day and there's so much you can do and I think you really find out who your friends are and you really find out who's close to you when they tolerate you for you. You know, there's no fronts, there's no, you know.

S: How do you feel about the way that your husband performs household tasks?

G: Oh, he's great. He's extremely meticulous. At one time he wouldn't even allow me to do bathrooms because I couldn't do them good enough for his tastes. No, he's very - that was one of the things that I was really attracted to when I first met him was his place was just impeccable. There wasn't a lint ball where it shouldn't be. Like it was just - and so maybe it bothers him somewhat but then he can keep it up because I can't.

S: Do you think that his unwillingness to take on some of the responsibilities is because it involves child care?

G: Oh yeah. It would be more child care than anything. And he doesn't - like we used to do things - Saturday mornings were our clean up day and he'd be doing whatever he felt like doing and I'd be doing whatever I felt like doing and everything got done. Whereas now, I sort of had to fit our son into there somewhere and so I'll get doing whatever I can get done and then whatever hasn't been done, I'll try and touch on - and sometimes you almost feel like it's deliberate. Like, he knows I hate doing toilets so he'll leave the toilets. I mean, it's ridiculous but sometimes you feel that it's just - because there's so much and it's so: how can I? Oh, I forgot I've gotta do this too and when am I gonna get to that? You just have to keep an easy mind about it. It just can't all be done. And when our son is old enough he'll be helping [laughter]. But no, I would say he probably does as much as he feels he should do to keep things the way he's used to them being. But that he feels there's - and I'm guessing here, but that he has certainly - I've had to lean on him more than I used to. But when it comes to our son he's not sure at all and doesn't want to learn.

S: And how do you feel about that?

G: At first it didn't bother me at all but I think one downfall in the way we do things in society is that - I mean, it's a little more open because the father or the mother can stay home after the baby is born. But what's really sad is that it's expected that it's the mother that stays home and so it's automatic that the mother assumes all those roles. And then all of a sudden: bang, you've gotta get back into working. That's 8 hours of your day gone, if not more, for travel time. And yet you still gotta keep up with those same things you were getting done for 4 months. You know, it's just - and to try and break the husband in at the same time as you're getting back into work, is next to futile because they really don't want to, at least in my scenario. He'd prefer not to know: I'll have nothing to do with diapers. And baths are too much work. He doesn't want to accidentally drown him. And you know, it's just excuse after excuse but at the same time you kind of wonder.

S: What kinds of traditional attitudes and expectations have you encountered from people in your life?

G: Well, I think probably one would be the money thing where my husband usually - I mean, he's got his allotted amount of money that he spends each month doing whatever he wants. And that's like $400, so that's - and that's for nothing, absolutely nothing. Everything else is paid for: his car, his gas, his expenses. Everything is paid for, so he spends $400 a month on god only knows what and I don't ask. And other than that, he has to ask me: what can we get? Can we do this? Can I have this? Can we go here? And I'm the one that makes that decision. So, as far as my family is concerned, especially my father, I really have no place to do that. He feels that that should be my husband's or it should be mutual. My husband doesn't want it, so where does it fit? I think probably my mother and my grandmother both - my mother and her mother - both switch off on childcare at times. If my mom's got something she has to do, she'll leave my son with my grandmother. And I think they both feel deep down inside because just off comments here and there of: oh, well there's your mother. I'll be walking in the door: there's your mother; she really does love you-type attitude. And usually that's my grandmother saying it but it's just a slight little dig, a little nudge that: you should be home with your son, you know-type attitude. And you know, another example is: Gail, if you could be here and be taking your son through the malls, boy, you'd see how beautiful he is. Well, I know how beautiful he is; he's mine. But it's just, you know, little digs here and there. Where my place should be but yet they admire where I am. So I think that you're kind of knocked back and forth on - but you can't really sit and listen to what everybody tells you. Like, you just can't. If you did I don't think you'd ever - you'd be definitely looking for a bridge or something [laughter]. I just don't see how anybody could - you'd have to make your decisions and then just do them.

S: So it doesn't sound like they've put pressure on you to conform to their expectations.

G: Oh no, they wouldn't. They know I probably would do the exact opposite. I'm very strict in my own - in how I want to see things for myself. And they realize it and yet I think they value my friendship or whatever, enough to accept it. To their own degree [laughter]. Still remind me every now and then but, yeah.

S: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

G: I think I've kind of tended to lean on various problems that we're having. Because sometimes you feel that you're the only one going through it.

S: In what way?

G: Well it's just like when I had my son and I talked to several friends and relatives since then and they all said the same thing. You feel like you're the first and only lady in the world that's ever had a baby. You're the only one going through what you're having to go through to have this baby. And then the next day reality hits and you see 15 dozen women walking around with fat bellies or holding their babies and: oh god, I'm just one of the numbers, sort of thing. And I guess when you're sort of confined to your own home front, your own workplace, and your own way of doing things, you tend to feel that way too that there's nobody out there that's going through the same b.s. that I'm having to go through. And I don't want to go through this b.s. but the more I open up about it, i find, the more that I'm not the only person. Like, there's a heck of a lot of people and it seems the women are the ones taking the brunt of it. Like, they're the ones that seem to put the care and the concern into trying to get it right. Probably because they're the ones changing things. But it sure would be good to see something come of it. I don't know, it would just be really - it's kind of frustrating but at the same time it's worthwhile. The hope is there. The more people you find out are out there, the better you feel.

Appendix B

Study Description

My name is Serge Hein and I am a masters student in the basic program of the Educational Psychology Department at the University of Alberta. My thesis involves a phenomenological investigation of the conflict that women experience between work and family roles.

By having the opportunity to interview you, I hope to be able to gain insight into women's experiences of conflict between their roles as paid worker, mother, and wife. My own interest in exploring this topic was influenced by my interest in gender issues, organizational behavior, and human relationships. I am also interested in pursuing this topic because very little research has been done which looks at how women experience conflict between their work and family roles.

Your participation in the study will be in the form of three or four interviews with myself. The first interview will give us an opportunity to become acquainted and to learn something about each other's backgrounds.

Prior to our second interview, I would like you to take some time to think about your experiences as they relate to the topic that we are exploring. As you reflect on your experience from time to time, you may want to keep a record of your thoughts (but this is not necessary).

When we meet again for our second interview I will ask you to describe your experiences of work-family role conflict in as much detail as possible. It is important that you describe your **actual experience** and not your opinions on the topic we are exploring. Remember that there are no "right" or "wrong" responses. Also, don't tell me what you think I want you to tell me: I want to learn about **your** experiences of work-family role conflict, whatever they may be for you. The interview will be about one hour long. Another such interview may be necessary if we find that we haven't had enough time to adequately explore your experiences.

During our final interview, we will examine my understanding of your experience. After I have completed the study, I will be happy to share my findings with you.

I would also like to remind you again that your participation in this study is completely voluntary and that you can opt out at any time. All information will be kept strictly confidential. If you decide that you no longer want to participate in the study, all information about you will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss anything with me, please feel free to phone me at my home.

Serge Hein